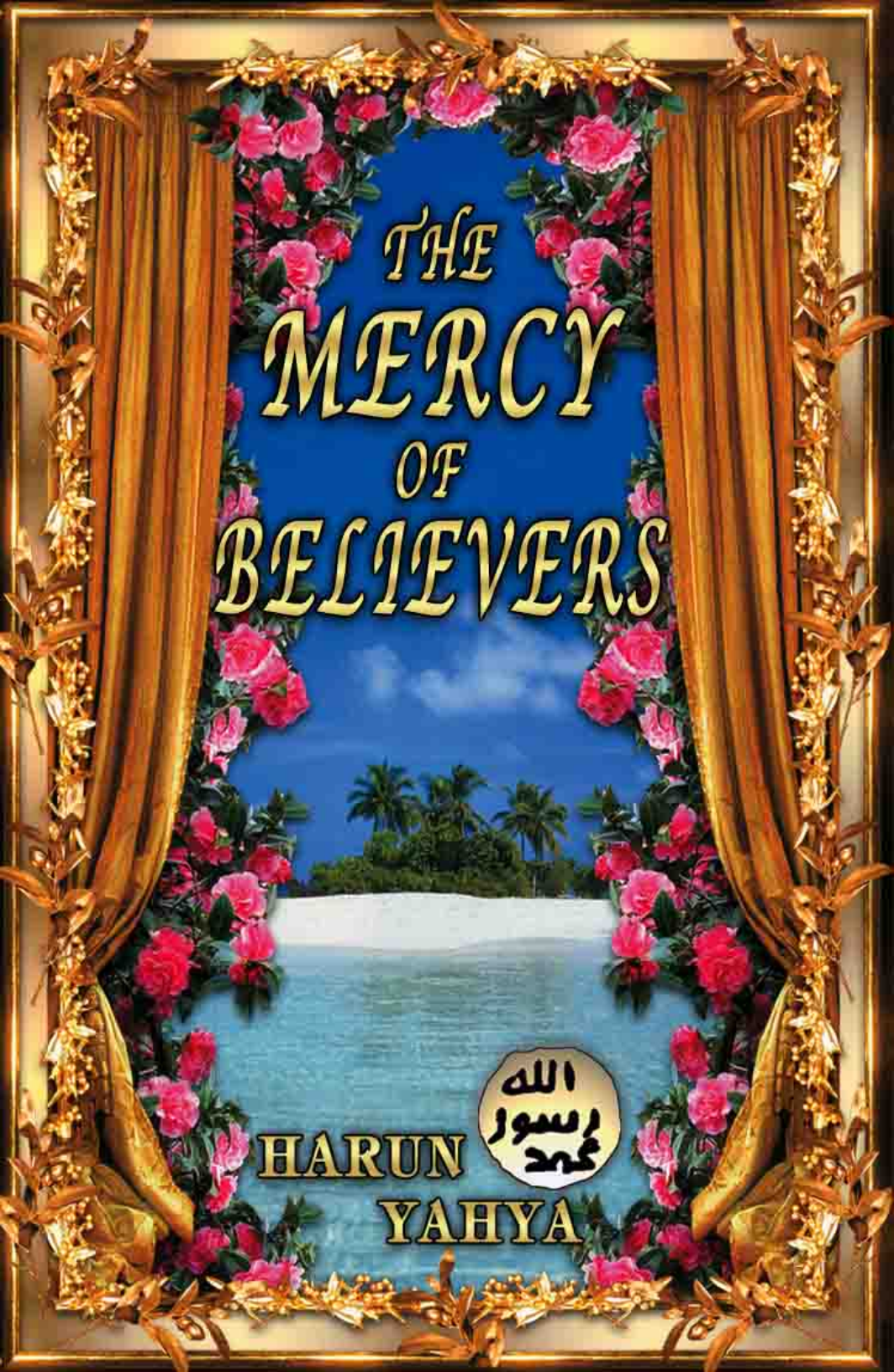
THE MERCY OF BELIEVERS



HARUN YAHYA

When you ask the people around you, "What is mercy?"" or "How would you define mercy?", you would, most probably, receive a variety of responses and illustrations. Some say that a neighbour feeding stray dogs on the street is the most compassionate person they have ever met. Others illustrate mercy with the interest and sincerity shown by a relative when they were sick. Others, on the other hand, regard a friend weeping for someone who has passed away as a "symbol of mercy". These definitions largely resemble one another. However, none of them offers the definition of mercy in its real sense.

The source of true compassion is love of Allah. An individual's love of Allah leads him to feel an intimacy towards all these beings to whom Allah has given life. Someone who loves Allah feels a direct link with and closeness to His creatures; he feels compassion and mercy towards them. Out of this profound love and attachment to Allah, Who created him, he behaves towards others in accordance with good morals as set forth in the Qur'an. He fulfils Allah's orders regarding mercy.

This book provides an account of the believers' understanding of mercy, which depends on the love of Allah, their practicing this goodness at every moment of human life, in accordance with the injunctions of the Qur'an, and the persons to whom they show mercy.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. He studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University, and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in helping many to return their faith in Allah, and, in many others, to gain a deeper insight into their faith. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all kinds of readers, regardless of their age, race, or nationality, for they focus on one objective: to broaden the readers' perspective by encouraging them to think about a number of critical issues, such as the existence of Allah and His unity, and to live by the values He prescribed for them.

Goodword
BOOKS

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



TO THE READER

The reason why a special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution is that this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation, and therefore the existence of Allah, during the last 140 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. Therefore, showing that this theory is a deception is a very important duty, which is strongly related to the religion. It is imperative that this important service be rendered to everyone. Some of our readers may find the chance to read only one of our books. Therefore, we think it appropriate to spare a chapter for a summary of this subject.

In all the books by the author, faith-related issues are explained in the light of Qur'anic verses, and people are invited to learn Allah's words and to live by them. All the subjects that concern Allah's verses are explained in such a way as to leave no room for doubt or question marks in the reader's mind. The sincere, plain and fluent style employed ensures that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand the books. This effective and lucid narrative makes it possible to read them in a single sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts recounted in these books and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This book and all the other works by Harun Yahya can be read individually or discussed in a group. Those readers who are willing to profit from the books will find discussion very useful in that they will be able to relate their own reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it is a great service to the religion to contribute to the presentation and circulation of these books, which are written solely for the good pleasure of Allah. All the books of the author are extremely convincing, so, for those who want to communicate the religion to other people, one of the most effective methods is to encourage them to read these books.

It is hoped that the reader will take time to look through the review of other books on the final pages of the book, and appreciate the rich source of material on faith-related issues, which are very useful and a pleasure to read.

In them, one will not find, as in some other books, the personal views of the author, explanations based on dubious sources, styles unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, or hopeless, doubt-creating, and pessimistic accounts that create deviations in the heart.

THE MERCY OF BELIEVERS

Then to be one of those who believe and urge each other to patience and urge each other to mercifulness. (Surat al-Balad: 17)

Goodword
BOOKS

HARUN YAHYA

February, 2003

About The Author

The author, who writes under the pen-name HARUN YAHYA, was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he then studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as an author who has written very important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, the invalidity of their claims and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and bloody ideologies such as fascism and communism.

His pen-name is made up of the names "Harun" (Aaron) and "Yahya" (John), in memory of the two esteemed prophets who fought against lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the cover of the books is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad, the last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and sunnah, the author makes it his purpose to disprove each one of the fundamental tenets of godless ideologies and to have the "last word", so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. The seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, is used as a sign of his intention of saying this last word.

All author' s works center around one goal: to convey the Qur' an' s message to people, encourage them to think about basic faith-related issues (such as the existence of Allah, His unity and the Hereafter), and to expose the feeble foundations and perverted ideologies of godless systems.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian, and they are enjoyed by readers worldwide.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering their faith in Allah and in many others gaining a deeper insight into their faith. The wisdom, and the sincere and easy-to-understand style gives these books a distinct touch which directly effects any one who reads or studies them. Immune to objections, these works are characterized by their features of rapid effectiveness, definite results and irrefutability. It is unlikely that those who read these books and give serious thought to them can any longer sincerely advocate the materialistic philosophy, atheism or any other perverted ideology or philosophy. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence since these books refuted such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the collection of books written by Harun Yahya.

There is no doubt that these features result from the wisdom and lucidity of the Qur'an. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Considering these facts, those who encourage people to read these books, which open the "eyes" of the heart and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would just be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books which create confusion in peoples' minds, lead man into ideological chaos, and which, clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in peoples' hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is apparent that it is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the moral values of the Qur'an. The success and impact of this service are manifest in readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and all the ordeals the majority of people undergo is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This state can only be ended with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, which leads people into the downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, it is clear that this service has to be provided more speedily and effectively. Otherwise, it may be too late.

It is no exaggeration to say that the collection of books by Harun Yahya have assumed this leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twentyfirst century will attain the peace, justice and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

The works of the author include ***The New Masonic Order, Judaism and Freemasonry, Global Freemasonry, Kabbalah and Freemasonry, Knight Templars, Islam Denounces Terrorism, Terrorism: The Ritual of the Devil, The Disasters Darwinism Brought to Humanity, Communism in Ambush, Fascism: The Bloody Ideology of Darwinism, The 'Secret Hand' in Bosnia, Behind the Scenes of The Holocaust, Behind the Scenes of Terrorism, Israel's Kurdish Card, The Oppression Policy of Communist China and Eastern Turkestan, Palestine, Solution: The Values of the Qur'an, The Winter of Islam and Its Expected Spring, Articles 1-2-3, A Weapon of Satan: Romanticism, The Light of the Qur' an Destroyed Satanism, Signs from the Chapter of the Cave to the Last Times, Signs of the Last Day, The Last Times and The Beast of the Earth, Truths 1-2, The Western World Turns to God, The Evolution Deceit, Precise Answers to Evolutionists, The Blunders of Evolutionists, Confessions of Evolutionists, The Misconception of the Evolution of the Species, The Qur'an Denies Darwinism, Perished Nations, For Men of Understanding, The Prophet Musa (as), The Prophet Yusuf (as), The Prophet Sulayman (as), The Prophet Muhammad (saas), The Golden Age, Allah's Artistry in Colour, Glory is Everywhere, The Importance of the Evidences of Creation, The Truth of the Life of This World, The Nightmare of Disbelief, Knowing the Truth, Eternity Has Already Begun, Timelessness and the Reality of Fate, Matter: Another Name for Illusion, The Little Man in the Tower, Islam and the Philosophy of Karma, The Dark Magic of Darwinism, The Religion of Darwinism, The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution in 20 Questions, Engineering in Nature, Technology Mimics Nature, The Impasse of Evolution I (Encyclopedic), The Impasse of Evolution II (Encyclopedic), Allah is Known Through Reason, The Qur'an Leads the Way to Science, The Real Origin of Life, Consciousness in the Cell, Technology Imitates Nature, A String of Miracles, The Creation of the Universe, Miracles of the Qur'an, The Design in Nature, Self-Sacrifice and Intelligent Behaviour Models in Animals, The End of Darwinism, Deep Thinking, Never Plead Ignorance, The Green Miracle: Photosynthesis, The Miracle in the Cell, The Miracle in the Eye, The Miracle in the Spider, The Miracle in the Gnat, The Miracle in the Ant, The Miracle of the Immune System, The Miracle of Creation in Plants, The Miracle in the Atom, The Miracle in the Honeybee, The Miracle of Seed, The Miracle of Hormone, The Miracle of the Termite, The Miracle of the Human Body, The Miracle of Man's Creation, The Miracle of Protein, The Miracle of Smell and Taste, The Miracle of Microworld, The Secrets of DNA.***

The author's childrens books are: ***Wonders of Allah's Creation, The World of Animals, The Glory in the Heavens, Wonderful Creatures, Let's Learn Our Islam, The Miracles in Our Bodies, The World of Our Little Friends: The Ants, Honeybees That Build Perfect Combs, Skillful Dam Builders: Beavers.***

The author's other works on Quranic topics include ***The Basic Concepts in the Qur'an, The Moral Values of the Qur'an, Quick Grasp of Faith 1-2-3, Ever Thought About the Truth?, Crude Understanding of Disbelief, Devoted to Allah, Abandoning the Society of Ignorance, The Real Home of Believers: Paradise, Knowledge of the Qur'an, Qur'an Index, Emigrating for the Cause of Allah, The Character of the Hypocrite in the Qur'an, The Secrets of the Hypocrite, The Names of Allah, Communicating the Message and Disputing in the Qur'an, Answers from the Qur'an, Death Resurrection Hell, The Struggle of the Messengers, The Avowed Enemy of Man: Satan, The Greatest Slander: Idolatry, The Religion of the Ignorant, The Arrogance of Satan, Prayer in the Qur'an, The Theory of Evolution, The Importance of Conscience in the Qur'an, The Day of Resurrection, Never Forget, Disregarded Judgements of the Qur'an, Human Characters in the Society of Ignorance, The Importance of Patience in the Qur'an, General Information from the Qur'an, The Mature Faith, Before You Regret, Our Messengers Say, The Mercy of Believers, The Fear of Allah, Jesus Will Return, Beauties Presented by the Qur'an for Life, A Bouquet of the Beauties of Allah 1-2-3-4, The Iniquity Called "Mockery," The Mystery of the Test, The True Wisdom According to the Qur'an, The Struggle Against the Religion of Irreligion, The School of Yusuf (as), The Alliance of the Good, Slanders Spread Against Muslims Throughout History, The Importance of Following the Good Word, Why Do You Deceive Yourself?, Islam: The Religion of Ease, Zeal and Enthusiasm Described in the Qur'an, Seeing Good in All, How do the Unwise Interpret the Qur'an?, Some Secrets of the Qur'an, The Courage of Believers, Being Hopeful in the Qur'an, Justice and Tolerance in the Qur'an, Basic Tenets of Islam, Those Who do not Listen to the Qur'an, Taking the Qur'an as a Guide, A Lurking Threat: Heedlessness, Sincerity in the Qur'an, The Religion of Worshipping People, The Ruses of the Liar in the Qur' an.***

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INTRODUCTION



When you ask the people around you, "What is mercy?" or "How would you define mercy?", you would, most probably, receive a variety of responses and illustrations. Some say that a neighbour feeding stray dogs on the street is the most compassionate person they have ever met. Others illustrate mercy with the interest and sincerity shown by a relative when they were sick. Others, on the other hand, regard a friend weeping for someone who has passed away as a "symbol of mercy". These definitions largely resemble one another. However, none of them offers the definition of mercy in its real sense.

The source of true compassion is love of Allah. An individual's love of Allah leads him to feel an intimacy towards all these beings to whom Allah has given life. Someone who loves Allah feels a direct link with and closeness to His creatures; he feels compassion and mercy towards them. Out of this profound love and attachment to Allah, Who created him and all other people, he behaves towards others in accordance with good morals as

set forth in the Qur'an. He fulfils Allah's orders regarding mercy. Real mercy is manifested when one fully complies with these commands of the Qur'an. That is because the Qur'an is the very source that describes, in the most accurate way, what real compassion means and what a compassionate human being should do. There are numerous verses in the Qur'an which guide people to act with true mercy.

However, there is an important difference between the love felt for Allah and a feeling of compassion. This difference results from the fact that love for Allah is sincere and pure. Compassion embraces love mixed with feelings of mercy that is felt for someone because of his weaknesses. Whereas, there is no compassion in the love felt for Allah, because Allah is far from all kinds of incompleteness, weaknesses and defects. The feeling for one's own Creator can only be a powerful feeling of "love", which inspires enthusiasm, excitement, admiration and adoration. Hence, sincere and pure love can be felt only for Allah, whereas compassion can be felt for beings created by Allah to be weak and powerless.

The Qur'an provides a detailed description of true mercy, the attributes of a compassionate person, the kind of differences compassion brings forth in one's morality and finally the positive influence compassionate people have on their environment. Allah also gives an account of cruelty originating from a lack of compassion and mercy. Accordingly, the good and the bad, the unjust and the compassionate have been distinguished from one other.

Believers, by nature, are those who enjoy the sublime

morality of the Qur'an. Therefore, they feel peace of mind only when they truly experience this morality. This being so, they do not feel any difficulty in showing compassion as portrayed in the Qur'an. On the contrary, they experience it as a natural good, originating from their faith. Allah summons believers to experience compassion as follows:

> **… And take the believers under your wing. (Surat al-Hijr: 88)**

Allah expresses the sort of compassion demonstrated by believers as "taking under the wing", because, compassion is perceived by them as a form of moral understanding extending to every moment of human life, rather than an attitude displayed in particular situations. Consequently, numerous moral and ethical characteristics emerge reflecting their compassion.

This book provides an account of the believers' understanding of mercy, which depends on the love of Allah, their practicing this goodness at every moment of human life, in accordance with the injunctions of the Qur'an, and the persons to whom they show mercy.

Similarly, this book is an invitation to all people to live by the moral standards with which Allah is pleased and to demonstrate mercy as described in the Qur'an. Allah has promised **"forgiveness and an immense reward"** (Surat al-Fath: 29) to His servants who believe, who are compassionate towards believers and engage in righteous deeds.

HOW IS MERCY DEFINED IN THE QUR'AN ?



Then to be one of those who believe and urge each other to patience and urge each other to mercifulness. Those are the Companions of the Right.
(Surat al-Balad: 17-18)

As expressed in the above verse, Allah commands His servants to **"urge each other to compassion"** in order to attain His mercy, to enter the Garden and to prosper on the Last Day. Believers, who devote their lives to gaining Allah's approval, try to fulfil this order of Allah impeccably. Their sincere faith in Allah underlies this very understanding of mercy. They are aware that nothing occurs unless by the Will of Allah and realise their need to have all His blessings bestowed upon them. Accordingly, believers are humble, which is a consequence of such awareness. These very attributes constitute the basis of their mercy.

One who is not humble in the real sense, cannot show

real mercy. That is because he thinks about himself alone, loves himself and gives importance solely to his own wishes and interests. That is why he never considers the needs of others. He deems other people worthless and unimportant. Consequently, he fails to have feelings of compassion and affection.

Another reason why believers are committed to showing compassion is their earnest desire to embody the morality deemed good by Allah. As explained in numerous verses, Allah is **"the Most Merciful of the merciful".** For that reason, believers strive to experience compassion to the best of their ability.

As Allah revealed in the Qur'an, **"If it had not been for the favour of Allah upon you and His mercy, (you would have suffered many difficult situations)."** (Surat an-Nur: 20) The above verse shows the extent to which believers are in need of the compassion and mercy of Allah. Since they themselves seek to obtain Allah's Mercy, they try to be as compassionate as possible towards other believers.

As is true of all other issues, the unique guide that sheds light on the kind of mercy they have to show is the Qur'an. Thus, believers only show mercy and compassion in situations deemed to be proper by Allah and towards people specified by Allah.

Mercy as described in the Qur'an emerges as being quite distinct from other kinds of mercy. But the majority of those who are distant from religion possess a rather flawed understanding of the subject. Faced with untoward happenings, they are seized by an ill-defined feel-

ing of mercy and act accordingly. This indeed shows a crude understanding of how they should respond, because they act without knowing who is right or wrong, without making a just and rational assessment and, more importantly, without considering the commands of the Qur'an. Often, they tend to behave in a manner likely to do harm both to themselves and to other people; their attempts to remedy matters are abortive because they take ill-considered decisions. Their understanding of compassion thus presents a structure uninspired by the values of the Qur'an.

In relation to this subject, we need to dwell on another important point. People sometimes harbour an understanding of mercy which may be wrong according to the Qur'an. Since this kind of mercy does harm to people rather than good, it may be considered as "evil compassion". In societies which are indifferent to religion, people allow others to engage in any act without considering its baneful result in the hereafter. For instance, they allow them to behave immorally and turn a blind eye when they engage in an act forbidden by Allah, or even encourage them.

The criteria believers adopt for themselves in this matter is that the mercy shown to others must definitely make a positive impact in terms of others' eternal life in the hereafter. In some cases, the love and mercy they feel for believers may entail their interfering or criticising them on some issues which may be hard on their lower selves *(an-nafs)*. Upon witnessing a wicked deed, they may criticise the perpetrator and make strong pleas to

deter him from such a deed. This is indeed true compassion. That is because, at the risk of causing offence to the other party, they put a stop to a conduct at variance with Qur'anic teaching and thus prevent that person from engaging in an act that would incur eternal torment in hell—a point of no return. For that reason, believers encourage others to display the morality with which Allah will be pleased most, and which will prepare them for a life in paradise. In so doing, they display the most elevated form of mercy. One needs to keep in mind that the real cruelty is not to consider the eternal life and to deliberately ignore mistakes that would incur punishment.

In this respect, believers follow the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, as their role model, who, in the words of the Qur'an, was **"truly vast in character"**. (Surat al-Qalam: 4)

In another verse, Allah reveals the elevated morality of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: **"A Messenger has come to you from among yourselves. Your suffering is distressing to him; he is deeply concerned for you; he is gentle and merciful to the believers."** (Surat at-Tawba: 128) Thus, in compliance with Allah's command, believers who adopt this morality behave compassionately and mercifully towards believers by considering their rewards in the hereafter.

TO WHOM DO BELIEVERS SHOW COMPASSION AND MERCY?



Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are fierce to the disbelievers, merciful to one another. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking Allah's good favour and His pleasure. Their mark is on their faces, the traces of prostration…
(Surat al-Fath: 29)

On every issue, the Qur'an, the only guide that "discriminates between right and wrong" lays down the mode of behaviour for believers. In the Qur'an, real compassion, and to whom and under which conditions believers are to show mercy are all made explicit. The following section deals with these topics.

Mercy Shown Towards Believers

Allah clarifies in the Qur'an that Muhammad, may

Allah bless him and grant him peace, is His Messenger and that **"those who are with him are fierce to the disbelievers, merciful to one another"**. (Surat al-Fath: 29)

As this verse makes explicit, the people to whom believers show compassion are again believers, that is, those who have faith in Allah and who fear Him. One and above all else, they fulfil this as a command of Allah. This aside, seeing a believer's love for Allah, his elevated morality and his striving to earn Allah's approval and the exemplary morality he displays inspires a natural love, mercy and compassion in other believers' hearts. As is expressed in this verse, **"Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe: those who establish prayer and pay the welfare tax, and bow"** (Surat al-Ma'ida: 55), believers know that they are the guardians of one another and act with the sincerity and fondness this acknowledgement brings. These attributes are expressed in another verse as follows:

> **The men and women of the believers are friends of one another. They command what is right and forbid what is wrong, and establish prayer and pay the welfare tax, and obey Allah and His Messenger. They are the people on whom Allah will have mercy. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (Surat at-Tawba: 71)**

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also told believers, *"You will not be true believers until you are merciful with one another."*(Bukhari and Muslim)

Thus, having this concept of friendship, believers aspire to eliminate all factors likely to cause trouble for one another and to create a peaceable and comfortable envi-

ronment. They are aware that their brothers are weak servants of Allah like themselves. They acknowledge that they are apt to make mistakes, to commit errors of memory or to be forgetful. Therefore, they are never seized by feelings of anger or mercilessness and compassionately encourage one another to do good.

Nevertheless, Allah orders believers to be "fierce" to the disbelievers. That is because disbelievers struggle with the religion of Allah and even try to prevent people from living by it. This being the case, showing mercy to such people means turning a blind eye to the harm they are likely to do to religion. This is an utterly unacceptable situation with which believers would severely struggle until the end of their lives. Accordingly, they feel compassion towards sincere believers who fear Allah and who strive to earn Allah's approbation.

Compassion Shown Towards Those Who Emigrated in the Way of Allah

In the Qur'an, the emigrants are defined as those **"who were driven from their homes and wealth desiring the favour and the pleasure of Allah and supporting Allah and His Messenger"**. (Surat al-Hashr: 9) In another verse, it is stated that these people had been expelled from their homes without any right only because they said: **"Our Lord is Allah"**. (Surat al-Hajj: 40)

Allah assigned believers to protect those who migrated in the way of Allah and informed them that these people were the guardians and friends of one another:

Those who believe and have migrated and struggled

with their wealth and themselves in the Way of Allah, and those who have given refuge and help, they are the friends and protectors of one another… (Surat al-Anfal: 72)

Believers, whom Allah characterizes as those who "give refuge", extend their help to those who, leaving everything they owned behind, take refuge with them, although they had no prior acquaintance with them. Neither the wealth, nor the status, nor the occupations of the refugees have any importance for them, since they only help because they say they have faith in Allah. Leaving this aside, they have no expectations from them, whether immediate or long-term. Their purpose is to earn Allah's approval and therefore, they expect their rewards only from Allah.

The support provided by believers to those emigrants is a sign of their elevated morality and understanding of mercy. Yet, they essentially display this morality because it is a command of Allah. This obligation of believers is related in the following verse:

Let not those of you who possess affluence and ample wealth ever become remiss in helping (the erring ones among) their relatives and the very poor and those who have migrated in the way of Allah. They should rather pardon and overlook. Would you not love Allah to forgive you? Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat an-Nur: 22)

In compliance with this command of Allah, believers accept those who flee their homes as their "brothers" and demonstrate a deep compassion for them. They share all

their earnings with them, care for them and provide them with shelter. To make them feel at home and to ease their trouble, they anticipate their potential needs before they express them and try to meet them.

However, what is most important is that believers make all these sacrifices voluntarily, without feeling any distress. If necessary, they offer their own food, clothing and even their homes to the refugees even if they themselves are in need and this never causes them any uneasiness. Indeed, the fellow feeling they show to those who migrate soothes their conscience. It pleases them greatly to display such morality as pleases Allah. The morality of such believers is described in the following verse:

> **Those who were already settled in the abode, and in faith, before they came, love those who have migrated to them and do not find in their hearts any need for what they have been given and prefer them to themselves even if they themselves are needy.**
> **It is the people who are safe-guarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat al-Hashr: 9)**

Allah informs us that these people "are successful", because of their sublime morality. Glad tidings are given in another verse to those who display such attitudes as are most favoured by Allah towards the emigrants only to gain Allah's approval:

> **…Those who have given refuge and help (to those who have migrated), they are the true believers. They will have forgiveness and generous provision. (Surat al-Anfal: 74)**

Compassion Shown for Parents

Doing good and showing compassion for parents are clear commands that have been repeated in many verses of the Qur'an:

We have instructed man to honour his parents… (Surat al-'Ankabut: 8)

We have instructed man to be good to his parents… (Surat al-Ahqaf: 15)

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him, and that you should show kindness to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say "Ugh!" to them out of irritation and do not be harsh with them but speak to them with gentleness and generosity. Take them under your wing, out of mercy, with due humility and say: "Lord, show mercy to them as they did in looking after me when I was small". (Surat al-Isra': 23-24)

In compliance with the commands of Allah, believers show a compassionate attitude towards their parents who grow old and need care.

The above verse also explains the extent to which a believer must show compassion to his parents. With the admonition, **"do not say 'Ugh!' to them out of irritation and do not be harsh with them but speak to them with gentleness and generosity"** (Surat al-Isra': 23), Allah prohibits believers from adopting a disrespectful manner or even a merciless attitude. Therefore, believers behave very kindly and compassionately towards their parents

who grow old and become weak. They do their best to make them feel comfortable and always respect them. Considering the difficulties and distress old age is likely to bring, they anticipate all their needs. This aside, they never stop being tender-hearted and respectful in their manner, no matter what the circumstances. On this matter, a hadith of the Prophet (says):

I asked, "Messenger of Allah, to whom should I be dutiful?" He replied, "Your mother"...."Then to whom should I be dutiful?" He replied, "Your father,and then the next closest relative and then the next". (Bukhari, Muslim)

However, there is a different kind of situation which a believer is likely to encounter regarding his parents; it may well be that the parents of a believer might have chosen the path of disbelief. The attitude a believer has to adopt in such a case would be to graciously and tolerantly summon them back to the right path. The dialogue between the Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, and his father is exemplary in the sense of the manner to be adopted and the attitude to be assumed. When the Prophet Ibrahim wanted his father to desist from worshipping idols, he addressed him thus:

Mention Ibrahim in the Book. He was a true man and a prophet.

Remember when he said to his father, "Father, why do you worship what can neither hear nor see and is not of any use to you at all?

Father, knowledge which never reached you has come to me, so follow me and I will guide you to the right path.

Father, do not worship Devil. Devil was disobedient to the All-Merciful.

Father, I am afraid that a punishment from the All-Merciful will afflict you, and turn you into a comrade of Devil". (Surah Maryam: 41-45)

However, as is in the case of the Prophet Ibrahim's father, there may be certain people who remain indifferent to an exhortation made in a kind and respectful manner. In the face of such indifference however, in compliance with Allah's command, believers must still maintain their reverent and compassionate attitude towards their old and needy parents. Nevertheless, they do not respect or obey their ideas, since they (their parents) live by the principles of a perverted system of beliefs. The unique guide to the true path for a believer is Allah's commands and Allah explains the attitude a believer must adopt in such a situation in this way:

But if they try to make you associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. Keep company with them correctly and courteously in this world but follow the Way of him who turns to Me. Then you will return to Me and I will inform you about the things you did. (Surah Luqman: 15)

Kindness Shown to Travellers

The attitude assumed towards travellers is another manifestation of the beneficence of believers. Believers provide all forms of material and spiritual support to

wayfarers, who, for one reason or another, have difficulty in reaching their final destination, and they ensure that they arrive there safe and sound. Meanwhile, they consider the potential difficulties and troubles they are to encounter, take effective steps to eliminate them, and provide all other necessary assistance. This obligation, which Allah imposes on believers, is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

> **… (Be good to) travellers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful. (Surat an-Nisa': 36)**
>
> **The offerings given for the sake of Allah is for the poor, the destitute, those who collect it, reconciling people's hearts, freeing slaves, those in debt, spending in the Way of Allah, and travellers. It is a legal obligation from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surat at-Tawba: 60)**

In the above verses, Allah commands believers to "be good" to these people apart from the material support they offer. Given the elevated values of the Qur'an, it is easy for believers to know—as a matter of conscience—how to "do good" and they take great pleasure in displaying these good manners. They think about the possible needs of a wayfarer and accordingly assume a naturally sensitive attitude towards them.

These commands of Allah also reveal the understanding of responsibility and the humane qualities instilled in believers by the Qur'an. Believers, who take upon themselves the responsibility for a wayfarer, never remain heedless towards incidents taking place around them. Towards one who needs help, they never assume an in-

humane attitude or say, "He is someone I have never met before", "This is none of my business", or "I don't care a bit how he copes with this situation".

They care for the needy and support them with whatever means Allah has bestowed upon them. If they lack the material means to provide the necessary support, they still do not leave them to their own devices, but seek solutions on their behalf. Indeed, in most cases, they put up a far better effort than the needy person himself and continue to deal with the matter until all problems are entirely resolved and needs are satisfactorily met.

This morality and compassion displayed by believers stem from their attachment to Allah which is marked by a profound love for and fear of Him. It is again because of this attachment that believers meticulously comply with the values of the Qur'an.

Compassion Shown Towards the Poor

Some people in societies indifferent to religion consider themselves to be highly sensitive to the needs of the poor. However, the attitude these people assume towards the poor is only a matter of habit. Sensitivity in its real sense appears only when people fully comply with the commands of the Qur'an.

Believers meticulously fulfil the commands of the Qur'an regarding the poor out of their fear of Allah. They do this because it is a command of Allah and because this is what their understanding of mercy and their conscience tell them to do. Believers are thus zealous in making all kinds of sacrifices of their own free will.

In Surat at-Tawba, verse 60, the poor are specified among those to whom alms must be given. According to this verse, giving alms to the poor becomes an obligation for believers. In the verse, **"And beggars and the destitute received a due share of their wealth"** (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 19), Allah makes it clear that alms must be given not only to those who openly express their indigence but also to those who refrain from doing so because of their nobility of character.

In the following verse Allah elaborates upon the situation of the latter class of people.

> **It (Charity) is for the poor who are held back in the Way of Allah, unable to travel in the land. The ignorant consider them rich because of their reticence. You will know them by their mark. They do not ask from people insistently. Whatever good you give away, Allah knows it. (Surat al-Baqara: 273)**

As is expressed in the above verse, such people refrain from importuning others for help. However, believers, as a matter of conscience and compassion, recognise the indigence of these people and offer them support to meet their needs. If necessary, they give precedence to the needs of these people over their own. In accordance with the hadith of Allah's Messenger, *"Blessed is the wealth of a Muslim from which he gives to the poor, the orphans and to needy travelers"* (Bukhari), they know that this is good for them. The Qur'an describes this noble understanding of mercy which is peculiar to believers as follows:

> **They give food, despite their love for it, to the poor and orphans and captives, (saying): "We feed you**

only out of desire for the Face of Allah. We do not want any repayment from you or any thanks". (Surat al-Insan: 8-9)

As is evident, believers never try to make others feel indebted because of the compassion they demonstrate or the help they offer, nor do they even expect to be thanked. Their true aim is to try to gain Allah's approval by means of the morality they display. That is because they know that they will be called to account for that morality on the Day of Judgment, and giving alms to the poor is a deed about which they will be questioned. In the Qur'an, Allah has expressly revealed that hell will be the destination of those who knowingly refuse to comply with His commands. It is said that the righteous will ask the sinners:

"What caused you to be scorched?"

They will say, "We were not among those who did prayer and we did not feed the poor. (Surat al-Muddaththir: 42-44)

(Allah commands:) "Seize him and truss him up."

Then roast him in the Blazing Fire.

Then bind him in a chain which is seventy cubits long.

He used not to believe in Allah the Magnificent,

nor did he urge the feeding of the poor." (Surat al-Haqqa: 30-34)

People's failing to encourage one another to support the poor singles them out for the ignoble end of being cast into hell. On this, the Almighty specifies who wrongdoers are:

Have you seen him who denies the religion?

He is the one who harshly rebuffs the orphan and does not urge the feeding of the poor. (Surat al-Ma'un: 1-3)

"Nor do you urge the feeding of the poor." (Surat al-Fajr: 18)

This aside, the compassion shown by believers to the poor is not limited to material support. In compliance with the verse "…**Be good to** your parents and relatives and to orphans and **the very poor**, and to neighbours who are related to you and neighbours who are not related to you, and to companions and travellers and your slaves". (Surat an-Nisa': 36), believers are kind and respectful towards the poor. In yet another verse, Allah commands believers to be forgiving and tolerant to the poor:

Let not those of you who possess affluence and ample wealth ever become remiss in helping (the erring ones among) their relatives and the very poor and those who have migrated in the way of Allah. They should rather pardon and overlook. Would you not love Allah to forgive you? Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat an-Nur: 22)

As is evident, the high morality with which believers deal with the poor also manifests their mercy. Aware that the ultimate Owner of everything is Allah alone, believers acknowledge that everyone is poor before Allah's wealth and thus also approach the poor with affection and compassion.

Mercy Shown to Orphans

Orphans must be treated not with harshness but with beneficence

The mercifulness of believers may also be observed in their approach to orphans. The noblest of attitudes that must be shown to orphans, who need the care and interest of others because they have lost their parents, are made explicit in the Qur'an. One of the exemplary attitudes believers meticulously adopt is "to do good" to orphans and "never to treat them harshly".

In societies in which the values of the Qur'an are not observed, no system has been devised to protect the rights of orphans or to secure their future. Protection, such as it is, depends upon the conscience of the people. For this reason, some ill-intentioned individuals may try to benefit from the lack of experience and ignorance of these children. Indeed, having no one to protect their rights, orphans can readily become subject to abusive treatment at the hands of those who have taken it upon themselves to care for them. Such people may expect orphans to feel gratitude because they have taken them under their wing or they may reproachfully remind them of the kindnesses they have done them. On the other hand, subjecting them to a different kind of treatment, they may oppress these children in both the physical and the spiritual sense. Nevertheless, Allah prohibits subjecting orphans to harsh treatment and condemns those who mistreat them:

Have you seen him who denies the religion?

He is the one who harshly rebuffs the orphan

and does not urge the feeding of the poor.

So woe to those who do prayer,

and are forgetful of their prayer,

those who show off

and deny help to others. (Surat al-Ma'un: 1-7)

Contrary to such offensive treatment, Qur'anic morality demands tolerant and compassionate treatment of orphans as expressed in the verse, **"(be good to) orphans and the very poor. And speak good words to people"**. (Surat al-Baqara: 83) Believers meticulously observe this command. Their conscience and understanding of humanity entail the protection of orphans who need help and care, and the meeting of all their spiritual and material needs. Believers never oppress orphans, expect them to appreciate their kindness or strive to obtain any material or spiritual benefits from them. On the contrary, they protect their rights and adopt the best possible attitude. Their strong sense of what is right, their profound fear of Allah and their compassion account for this meticulousness.

Improving the situation in life of orphans and bringing them up as decent individuals

…They will ask you about the property of orphans. Say, "Managing it in their best interests is best". If you mix your property with theirs, they are your brothers… (Surat al-Baqara: 220)

As is implied in the above verse, Allah advises believers to bring orphans up as decent individuals. Believers show keenness to take this responsibility upon themselves and do their best to educate them in the best way possible.

However, the most important responsibility of a person who takes a child under his protection is to instil in him the noble values of the Qur'an and to make him regard Allah with due appreciation. That is because, these are the most important issues that guide the individual to truth and salvation. A child develops moral sense in the light of the knowledge he acquires in his early years and is accordingly prepared for his eternal life in the hereafter. For this reason, this is the most important issue to which a believer pays attention while an orphan under his care is being educated. He does his utmost to ensure that he or she has superior values as a believer. No doubt, this is only made possible by his living by the values of the Qur'an himself. Abiding by Islamic ethics ensures that orphans grow up into decent, intelligent, hard-working individuals.

Protection of orphans' property

Allah issues a stern warning to those who misappropriate the wealth of orphans:

> **People who consume the property of orphans wrongfully consume nothing in their bellies except fire. They will roast in a Searing Blaze. (Surat an-Nisa': 10)**

In compliance with the above verse, believers who as-

sume the responsibility for an orphan do not spend that orphan's personal wealth for their own needs or expect anything in return. On the contrary, giving them priority over all others, they protect the rights and wealth of such orphans as are entrusted to them by Allah.

Being meticulous about protecting the wealth of an orphan entrusted to one's care is something peculiar to those who are sincere in their faith, who have a high standard of morality and who grasp the understanding of mercy described in the Qur'an, especially since a guardian is granted the authority to spend the wealth of an orphan. Not spending a penny for one's own personal needs out of a property entrusted to one—despite having the authority to spend from it is truly a matter of conscience. In the Qur'an, Allah advises the wealthy guardian to behave decently in this matter. If the guardian in question is poor, then he is allowed to spend within the due limits specified in the Qur'an. Believers who fear Allah and who are aware of the Day of Judgement behave in a manner in His eyes, most in keeping with the dictates of the conscience, and in observance of the Prophet's warning *"Whoever is not merciful towards people, will not be treated mercifully by Allah." (Ahmad).* That is because, Allah warns that, "devouring" the wealth of the orphan is a grave sin.

> **Give orphans their property, and do not substitute bad things for good. Do not assimilate their property into your own. Doing that is a serious crime. (Surat an-Nisa': 2)**

Fearing Allah and His grievous punishment in the

hereafter, believers carefully conserve the wealth of orphans until they reach intellectual maturity. When orphans grow old and mature enough to exercise rational and healthy judgement, believers hand over their property to them. The conditions of this are specified in the Qur'an as follows:

> **Keep a close check on orphans until they reach a marriageable age, then if you perceive that they have sound judgement hand over their property to them. Do not consume it extravagantly and precipitately before they come of age. Those who are wealthy should abstain from it altogether. Those who are poor should use it sensibly and correctly. When you hand over their property to them ensure that there are witnesses on their behalf. Allah suffices as a Reckoner. (Surat an-Nisa': 6)**

Believers comply exactly with all these commands relating to the care and education of orphans. A comparison made between the way people in societies distant from religion treat orphans and the attitude of believers shows the nobleness of Qur'anic morality.

Mercy Shown to Debtors

Another very good example of the mercy peculiar to believers is the attitude they assume towards debtors. Allah relates the proper attitude one has to adopt to debtors in the following verse:

> **If someone is in difficult circumstances, there should be a deferral until things are easier. But making a free gift of it would be better for you if you**

only knew. (Surat al-Baqara: 280)

Believers adopt an entirely compassionate and sensible attitude to one who is in difficulty over paying his debts. A believer, above all, is a person of wisdom and high conscience. Thus, he can very well understand what a person in debt goes through and accordingly assumes the most conscientious and compassionate attitude possible.

No doubt, debt is an important liability to take on, involving as it does a promise given to another party. Indeed, in numerous verses, Allah commands people to keep their promises. However, according to the above verse, when a debt is at issue, decision about its settlement, rests entirely with the creditor. The creditor can postpone repayment until the debtor is in better financial conditions. However, Allah stresses that it is better for a believer to waive the debt and consider it as alms.

The Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had this to say on the behaviour of the creditor:

"Who gives respite to a debtor or grants him remission, Allah will give him shade under His shade". (Muslim)

Nevertheless, there is one important point to consider here: The believer may exercise this right only when he believes in the honesty of the other party. This is not a procedure to follow for a debtor with a fraudulent mentality. Otherwise, people bereft of a sincere fear of Allah may attempt to defraud people of good faith who have good intentions.

At this point, a believer simply relies on his con-

science and wisdom, and obeys this command of the Qur'an when he feels the other party is decent and has sincere intentions.

Mercy Shown to Those Whose Hearts are to be Reconciled

The offerings given for the sake of Allah is for the poor, the destitute, those who collect it, reconciling people's hearts, freeing slaves, those in debt, spending in the Way of Allah, and travellers. It is a legal obligation from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surat at-Tawba: 60)

In the Qur'an, reference is made to a group of people "whose hearts are to be reconciled". These are the people who have recently started learning about Islam or who have no knowledge of religion at all, but for whom efforts are made to encourage them to have faith.

Believers who acknowledge the perfection of the religion Allah has chosen for mankind and witness its being the unique system in consonance with their creation, also wish others to live by this beautiful system. This aside, aware that all people will be called to give an account of their deeds on the Day of Judgement, they strive to warn them and summon them to the true path while there is still time. That is because, they know that the only way to attain salvation both in this world and beyond is to live by the guidelines of Islam. Allah commands believers to communicate His religion to the people. These virtues of believers are related in the Qur'an as follows:

You are the best nation ever to be produced before

mankind. You enjoin the right, forbid the wrong and believe in Allah. (Surah Al 'Imran: 110)

Believers take every opportunity to save people from a life which is distant from religion and to protect them from hell. They encourage them to do good and try to prevent them from engaging in wicked deeds. They aim to save such people as are on the brink of an abyss because of their ignorance. Allah thus describes the situation of these people before committing themselves to religion:

…You were on the very brink of a pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way Allah makes His Signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surah Al 'Imran: 103)

Believers, who are very well aware of the torment an irreligious life brings to man, try various ways of making people embrace Allah's religion and thus save them from the situation they are in. They make any sacrifice, both material and spiritual, to communicate their religion to those "whose hearts are to be reconciled". The Qur'an typifies as "alms" everything spent for the purpose of propagating religion. This is the kind of spending which will be rewarded generously in the sight of Allah. Indeed, having faith in Allah means being saved from the torment of hell and attaining an eternal life in paradise. The believers' understanding of mercy, stemming from their fear of Allah, entails spending without expecting anything in return. That is because, for believers, there exist no such benefits as would be received in return for such spending. Furthermore, when needed, they put restrictions on their

own needs or make other sacrifices to be able to offer this help. Meanwhile, we have to keep in mind that there is always the possibility that these people whose hearts are to be reconciled might never agree to embrace Islam. Even if this is the case, none of the efforts of a believer go unnoticed; he will be rewarded most bountifully in the hereafter. Throughout history, all messengers who were assigned to proclaiming the divine message, gave expression to this truth:

> **My people! I do not ask you for any wage for it. My wage is the responsibility of Him who brought me into being. So will you not use your intellect? (Surah Hud: 51)**

> **Say: "I do not ask you for any wage for it—only that anyone who wants to should make his way towards his Lord". (Surat al-Furqan: 57)**

Compassion Shown to Women

Providing maintenance for divorced women

Allah states in the Qur'an that providing maintenance for divorced women is an obligation for all men of faith:

> **Divorced women should receive maintenance given with correctness and courtesy: a duty for all who believe. (Surat al-Baqara: 241)**

The amount of the maintenance is to be determined by mutual agreement of the involved parties. While determining this amount, believers assume a conscientious attitude and take into account the social status and the needs of the woman. The appropriate behaviour Allah

recommends believers is stated as follows:

> **… But give them a gift—he who is wealthy according to his means and he who is less well off according to his means—a gift to be given with correctness and courtesy: a duty for all good-doers. (Surat al-Baqara: 236)**
>
> **He who has plenty should spend out from his plenty, but he whose provision is restricted should spend from what Allah has given him. Allah does not demand from any self more than He has given it. Allah will appoint after difficulty, ease. (Surat at-Talaq: 7)**

Whether well-off or poor, Allah commands believers to support women in a manner commensurate with their own means. In societies which do not live by the values of religion, generously supporting an ex-wife, from whom one can no longer derive any benefits, is regarded as vain spending. This being so, the people in question try to give the minimum alimony possible and to this end even resort to fraudulence. However, guided by his conscience and his compassion, a believer never reneges on such an obligation. After all, he performs this duty as a good deed which will earn him the approval of Allah. That he has no further expectations from her or that she has fallen in his estimation, never influences his attitude. Besides, his humane feelings and compassion incline him to support a person who is in need. For that reason, those who are well-off make adequate provision for divorced women to have a good standard of living. Similarly, a poor person does not shirk this responsibility, by saying, "I have in-

sufficient means"; he fulfils this responsibility in the best way he can.

Not taking back the properties given to women after divorce

If you desire to exchange one wife for another and have given your original wife a large amount, do not take any of it. Would you take it by means of slander and outright crime? How could you take it when you have been intimate with one another and they have made a binding contract with you? (Surat an-Nisa': 20-21)

In compliance with the command implicit in the above verses, upon the decision to divorce, a man of faith makes no request whatsoever to take back the properties he formerly gave to his wife. That is because these properties were meant to be a safeguard for the woman and their loss may put her in difficulty. To prevent such an undesirable situation, Allah imposes this condition upon male believers, thereby securing the social well-being of women.

Besides, the extent of this property does not lessen the obligation this verse imposes upon a man. Even if a believing man has given all his possessions to his spouse, he does not request the return of anything after separation.

As is evident, these commands of the Qur'an make manifest the superiority of the understanding of mercy the Qur'an offers to believers. At the cost of placing themselves in difficulties, believers never depart from the Qur'anic notion of mercy conveyed in these verses, and fully comply with it.

Setting divorced women free with liberality

In societies distant from religion, divorce often becomes a source of unrest and disagreements. This may be accounted for by the failure of the parties to reach a compromise. The two sides usually voice their own requests and claims and no criteria exist to judge their validity. The absence of these criteria leads to many disagreements and disputes.

The lives of believers are quite different from those of the members of unenlightened societies. Unlike disbelievers, they have a guide that directs every moment of their lives and gives the best decision on their behalf. This guide is the Qur'an, a blessing from Allah. People who comply with the Qur'an share exactly the same views and way of thinking; that is, they agree on the same rights, wrongs, demands and claims. Furthermore, since this common understanding rests upon the just Book Allah has revealed, only the best results ensue. People who initially establish their bonds upon such an understanding also display a compromising mood when they have to divorce.

Events and conditions may change but what matters for believers is to live by the principles of religion and to show such moral perfection as will please Allah. Having such a noble spirit, when divorce is in question, believers never cease to treat the other party with respect, mercy and kindness, also observing the Prophet Muhammad's counsel, *"The best of you are those who are best in dealing with their wives." (Tirmidhi)*. In the following verse Allah describes the behaviour expected from believers:

When you divorce women and they are near the end of their waiting period , then either retain them with correctness and courtesy or release them with correctness and courtesy. Do not retain them by force, thus overstepping the limits. Anyone who does that has wronged himself… (Surat al-Baqara: 231)

In obedience to this decree of Allah, believers terminate their marriages with the same good intentions as they had when they initially married. With divorce, men never lose the respect they had for their wives. In this sense, divorce never becomes a cause to dispute or to hurt one another. Believers marry to earn the approval of Allah and divorce with the same intention. Therefore, neither by his words nor his acts does a believer put the woman he divorces in a difficult situation. Furthermore, since believers love other believers for their faith and moral perfection, the love and respect spouses feel for one another never disappear with divorce.

Lodging divorced women

Thanks to the merciful attitude the Qur'an enjoins upon man, believers do not leave the women they divorce in a desperate situation without providing them with adequate means to live. Women may not have a family that can take care of them or even a house in which to stay. Considering these and similar conditions, believers, although divorced, ensure the welfare of women, until they find a way to support themselves.

Upon their mutual decision, believers allow the women they divorce to live in their own houses or in

some other place under their control. Their main intention here is to earn the approval of Allah and to display a compassionate attitude to another believer. Other than this, they have no other expectation. During this period, Allah recommends that believing men should not engage in any deed which would do any harm to women they divorced or put them in a difficult situation. This affectionate approach displayed towards women is explained in the verse below:

> **Let them live where you live, according to your means. Do not put pressure on them, so as to harass them. If they are pregnant, maintain them until they give birth. If they are suckling for you, give them their wages and consult together with correctness and courtesy. But if you make things difficult for one another, another woman should do the suckling for you. (Surat at-Talaq: 6)**

The second part of the verse recommends that believers display moral perfection while settling any problems that may arise after divorce, and that they resolve all disputes in compliance with Islamic rules. The values that ensure such a settlement no doubt stem from the fear of Allah a person harbours in his heart, and conscience. Believers, who value a person primarily because of his or her faith, can in no way allow anything harmful to happen to him or her, nor can they put that person in a difficult situation. To come up to this standard of moral perfection, men of faith provide lodging to and otherwise meet the needs of their divorced wives, as long as they ask for such support.

Not inheriting women against their will

You who believe! It is not lawful for you to inherit women by force. Nor may you treat them harshly so that you can make off with part of what you have given them, unless they commit an act of flagrant indecency. Live together with them correctly and courteously… (Surat an-Nisa': 19)

Allah warns believers against inheriting women against their will, except in situations in which women commit an explicit indecency. Never exerting any pressure on women, believing men allow women to make use of their possessions in any way they please after divorce.

However, we must bear in mind that, being so scrupulous comes from observing Qur'anic morality. Due to believers' adherence to Qur'anic principles firmly based on the fear of Allah, there is no diminution of the mercy shown by them to women, no matter what the circumstances. Indeed, even in an environment where there is no one to bear witness to their conduct, their compassionate attitude never alters. Aware that Allah witnesses every deed they do, believers commit themselves to never swerving from moral perfection.

In the Qur'an, there are numerous other verses about the measures that secure the protection of women with compassion and the prevention of their suffering. All these explicitly reveal how Qur'anic morality encourages the showing of mercy to women and how believers commit themselves to displaying this noble attitude.

EXEMPLARY VALUES OF BELIEVERS REFLECTING THEIR MERCY



So far, we have explained to whom believers should show mercy and the criteria the Qur'an lays down on this subject. We have also stressed that believers' compassion is a natural consequence of their fear of Allah and their elevated morality. That is also the reason why they adopt a compassionate attitude, irrespective of the circumstances.

In this section, we shall deal with how mercy permeates believers' lives, the elevated values arising from a correct understanding of mercy and how believers live by this morality. No doubt the attributes that reflect the believer's understanding of mercy are legion; yet, in this section, we have to limit ourselves to the most significant ones.

At this juncture, there is an important point to remember: believers display moral perfection as described in the Qur'an only because Allah commands so and because they fear Allah. "Mercy" is, therefore, an extremely important and fundamental value that enables them to

sincerely and properly live by Qur'anic morality and to maintain their commitment to it under all circumstances.

For instance, because it is a command of Allah and because a believer has a deep fear of Allah's punishment, a believer does not even think of cheating in measurement, weight or calculation, thereby distressing other believers or placing them in difficulties. This aside, the feelings of mercy he has in his heart make him grasp the divine purposes and delicacy inherent in this command and so he takes pleasure in observing it. In this way, he stands firm against all the provocations of evil and the urgings of his lower self.

It is unlikely that a person with immature feelings of mercy can be just, self-sacrificing and honest. A person devoid of compassion does not even think that he needs Allah's mercy, since he is also unaware of his own weaknesses. Consequently, he does not fear Allah as he should, and in his daily living he fails to display the good values of the Qur'an.

It should be borne in mind that, all the moral values described in the Qur'an are of a complementary nature; they perfect and support one another. The existence of one of them is conditional upon the existence of the others.

Below, we will see how mercy positively influences and perfects the other elevated moral values of believers.

To Rule with Justice

Mercy is a very important moral quality that ensures the exercise of justice. A believer never assumes a cruel or

merciless attitude towards another, be he friend or foe. His feelings of mercy make him committed to showing justice under all conditions.

Aware that Allah witnesses everything he does, says and even thinks, a person of faith never perpetrates any unjust deed. The Qur'an also enjoins believers to be just and believers know that acting against the commands of the Qur'an will surely bring upon them the grievous penalty of hell. Some of the commands of Allah on being just are as follows:

> **Allah commands you to return to their owners the things you hold on trust and, when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent is what Allah exhorts you to do! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (Surat an-Nisa': 58)**
>
> **We sent Our Messengers with the Clear Signs and sent down the Book and the Balance with them so that mankind might establish justice… (Surat al-Hadid: 25)**

Ibn 'Umar reported that in one of his hadiths, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said the following concerning the just behaviour of believers towards:

> *"A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he does him no injustice, nor does he leave him alone (to be the victim of another's injustice); and whoever does the needful for his brother, Allâh does the needful for him…"*

Another point we need to make clear here is the superiority of the believers' understanding of justice. In unenlightened societies, everyone entertains different ideas

about justice, which leads to justice being meted out in a variety of ways. Indeed, everyone has his own ideas about right and wrong and, in the light of these variable criteria, he makes judgements.

However, the situation is otherwise for believers. The basis of a believer's understanding of justice is in the Words of Allah, that is, in the Qur'an, which is the Just Book that provides man with the most exact knowledge of all things. Allah is infinitely just. Thus, a believer, who complies with His words and acquires the morality deemed to be favourable by Him, displays the most just attitude by nature.

Not to Approve of Cruelty

Believers never remain insensitive towards acts of cruelty that they witness, hear or learn about in some way. Their compassion, that stems from the morality of the Qur'an, calls for standing up against all forms of cruelty, protecting the rights of the innocent and, if necessary, struggling on their behalf.

They never hesitate to struggle against cruelty, whether the person subjected to it be a close friend or a stranger they have never met in all their lives. Moreover, they consider this as a precious opportunity to earn the approval of Allah and to display Qur'anic morality.

The members of a society not living by the values of religion, however, think that not making such sacrifices is a sign of cleverness and they label those who involve themselves in such efforts as "stupid". This clearly shows their forgetfulness of the fact that, all human beings will

be summoned to account for their good and wicked deeds on the Day of Judgement. A believer, however, who remains conscious of this fact, approaches even a stranger with compassion and strives to improve the situation of those who are exposed to cruelty.

Even in situations in which there is not a single soul who will support him, a believer commits himself to removing evil. The insensitive and unscrupulous attitude of those who do otherwise never make him falter in his commitment, although such people may be in the majority. He always keeps in mind that, in the hereafter, he will be questioned about every incident he witnessed and how he sided with the good and showed determination to remove evil. Contrary to the views of the majority, he knows that just saying, "I have not heard, seen or witnessed anything" by no means exonerates him. He never forgets that it will be only he who will be rewarded in case he acts conscientiously and again, only he will be punished if he ignores wrongdoing. This being the case, he never turns a blind eye to cruelty.

In societies where the values of religion are not observed, however, examples of moral negligence may be seen at all times. For instance, a person who witnesses an accident may just hurry past, so as not to have to go to any trouble or when he sees someone being unjustly treated, he may remain silent so as not to direct the anger of the oppressor towards himself.

However, a believer who is guided by his conscience and feelings of mercy, never remains silent at injustice or ignores such events. After all, he never oppresses anyone

or does any injustice, and thus becomes a role model for Quranic morality. If he sees others displaying conscienceless attitudes, he is disturbed by pangs of conscience himself until he feels he has striven enough to remedy the situation. That is because, true mercy does not allow one to ignore cruelty or turn one's back to it.

To Be Forgiving of Mistakes

One of the most important signs of Islamic virtue is to be forgiving and merciful. In the Qur'an, Allah calls His faithful servants to be "forgiving":

> **Practice forgiveness, command what is right, and turn away from the ignorant. (Surat al-A'raf: 199)**

This is an attitude that the lower self finds hard to assume, but which deserves great rewards in the sight of Allah.

An individual may be unwilling to forgive a mistake or may feel angry about it. However, Allah makes it clear that forgiveness is the better path to take and encourages believers to practise this elevated form of morality:

> **The repayment of a bad action is one equivalent to it. But if someone pardons and puts things right, his reward is with Allah. Certainly He does not love wrongdoers. (Surat ash-Shura: 40)**

In another verse, Allah draws attention to the fact that willingness to forgive is a praiseworthy attribute of a believer:

> **But if someone is steadfast and forgives, that is the most resolute course to follow. (Surat ash-Shura: 43)**

Let not those of you who possess affluence and ample wealth ever become remiss in helping (the erring ones among) their relatives and the very poor and those who have migrated in the way of Allah. They should rather pardon and overlook. Would you not love Allah to forgive you? Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat an-Nur: 22)

In the above verse, Allah calls believers to reflect upon how they would like to be treated. Indeed, every one strives for Allah's forgiveness, mercy and grace. He wishes that other people would forgive him when he makes a mistake. By recalling this, Allah wants people to treat others in the way they want to be treated by them. This is no doubt a major reason for believers to show mercy to one another.

Believers show mercy to other believers, no matter how serious their mistakes may be, although, their forgiveness is very different from the forgiveness of those who do not embrace Qur'anic morality.

Those who are distant from Qur'anic morality, may say that they have forgiven someone, but the rage and hate they feel deep in their hearts hardly lessens. Their attitude, often reproachful, gives hints of this rage. Indeed, they give vent to the rage and hate in their hearts whenever they have the opportunity.

Believers, on the other hand, sincerely forgive, which is conduct praised by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in the words he said to one of his companions *"You possess two qualities that Allah loves. These are clemency and tolerance." (Muslim)* Aware that man is by

nature a fallible being, they approach people with tolerance from the very outset. The verses in the Qur'an relative to repentance remind us that man is prone to mistakes, yet what really matters is his sincere efforts not to repeat a mistake once he realises he has done something wrong. One of the verses reads:

> **Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and then quickly repent after doing it. Allah turns towards such people. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surat an-Nisa': 17)**

As long as a believer displays such an attitude, which makes his sincerity explicit, believers treat him most compassionately and with forgiveness. They do not inwardly hold grudges for mistakes made by someone who repents, regrets and tries to make amends. When he is sincerely committed to never repeating his mistake, believers know that they cannot judge him adversely because of something he has done in the past and that the truly important thing is the recent morality he displays.

One distinctive quality of believers' forgiveness is their showing no hesitation to forgive, even in circumstances where they are completely right and the wrongdoer is utterly unjust, since Allah recommends this as a model example of morality:

> **Those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people—Allah loves the good-doers. (Surah Al 'Imran: 134)**

Considering this command of Allah, believers act humbly, thereby becoming role models for others to follow.

Another important personal quality stemming from the values of Qur'an is that, in their minds, believers do not classify mistakes as minor or serious and hence do not develop a different understanding of forgiveness according to the nature of each mistake. It may well be that the person in question has caused great material loss or has done harm to one's health by a mistake he has made. However, aware that every incident takes place by the will of Allah and in conformance with destiny, a believer faces up to such an incident by putting his trust in Him. Therefore, he never harbours anger deep in his heart, nor does he allow it to be stirred up.

Again, out of ignorance, this person might have disobeyed Allah's commands and transgressed His limits. Yet, in this situation, it is only Allah Who can judge the individual concerned. Thus, judging a person or not forgiving him is an attitude which a believer is not responsible for. The rewards one receives in return for sincere repentance and regret are at the will of Allah. Indeed, in numerous verses, Allah informs believers that He can forgive any mistakes except for that of "ascribing partners to Allah" *(shirk)*. Since believers can never know whether an act is of an idolatrous nature, they forgive by complying with Allah's commands and if there is a particular attitude recommended in the Qur'an which a believer must assume in the face of such a mistake, they do so.

At this point, we need to recall that for a believer, sincerity and doing good will serve as the main criteria for forgiveness. A believer identifies these qualities in a person by the wisdom and conscience he possesses. He

would no doubt debar one, who had made wickedness a way of life, from taking advantage of believers' compassion and good values. In such a case, a believer knows that true compassion entails not only forgiveness but also exhortations to be sincere and honest and to go in fear of Allah, all of which expresses his compassion in a more appropriate way.

Helping One Another in Goodness and Piety

Believers show their compassion by encouraging one another to engage in such deeds as would be most likely to earn Allah's blessing. They know that true compassion requires supporting one another in such a way as to become people worthy of the Garden. In that respect, they do their best to make up for each others' mistakes and shortcomings. Such cooperation is also what Allah and Qur'anic morality enjoin. The limits of such cooperation is specified in the Qur'an as follows:

> **…Help each other to goodness and heedfulness. Do not help each other to wrongdoing and enmity. Heed Allah. Allah is severe in retribution. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 2)**

As is also expressed in the above verse, believers' not helping one another in " wrongdoing and enmity" is another manifestation of true compassion. When someone asks help for same wicked aim, they do not behave ignorantly and say, "I might offend them" or "It would be improper not to help" because they know that even if the wrongdoer is frustrated by a refusal of help at that point,

he will certainly be pleased with the outcome in the hereafter, and that this is the best sign of one's compassion.

In the above verse, Allah informs us that the best assistance a believer can offer is in promoting goodness and piety. Again, we learn from the Qur'an what goodness is:

> **It is not righteousness to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, those with true righteousness are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish prayer and pay welfare tax; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who do their duty. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)**

As is evident, true goodness plainly differs from the sense of goodness prevalent in societies in which the values of religion do not prevail. People, who are distant from Qur'anic morality, perceive goodness as a favour done when one feels like it. This is an attitude occasionally adopted. Often this form of goodness is limited to not side-stepping beggars and to giving in charity, feeding stray dogs or giving one's seat to an elderly person in a crowded bus. However, all these favours are done only when, they do not harm one's interests.

Contrary to this picture, however, the kind of goodness described in the Qur'an is the kind of morality and worship practised right throughout one's life, and not

only when it happens to occur to one or one feels like it: it is not dependent on particular conditions. When necessary, a believer can consider making any sacrifice simply for the sake of doing a good deed or to encourage others to do good deeds.

Another subject on which Allah commands believers to help one another is the awe or fear of Allah (taqwa) which inspires the individual to be on his guard against wrong actions and to be eager to do things which please Allah. The following verses describe different aspects of "taqwa":

> **…Whatever good you do, Allah knows it. Take provision; but the best provision is doing your duty (taqwa). So heed Me, people of intelligence! (Surat al-Baqara: 197)**
>
> **Children of Adam! We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts, and fine apparel, but the clothing of heedfulness (taqwa)—that is best! That is one of Allah's Signs, so that hopefully you will pay heed. (Surat al-A'raf: 26)**
>
> **Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah's sight is the one who best performs his duty (one with the most taqwa). Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat: 13)**

The Qur'an informs us that what is precious in the sight of Allah is not the deed itself but the intention behind it and whether it has been done purely to earn Allah's approval. The following verse explains this as fol-

lows:

Their flesh and blood does not reach Allah but your heedfulness does reach Him… (Surat al-Hajj: 37)

Examples from our daily life are legion. For instance, one may give charity to the poor or make many sacrifices or be very considerate towards others. Yet, the real criterion here must be that while doing all these things, the individual must hope only to earn Allah's approval and seek only His rewards. If his intention is to show off, to earn the admiration or praise of others then it may well be that his efforts will be in vain. Ultimately, in the hereafter, everyone will be rewarded in accordance with his own piety.

In the Qur'an, Allah commands believers not only to do good deeds but also to be sincere about doing them. Cooperation among believers is based upon exactly these two criteria that are deemed to be precious in the hereafter. True compassion, indeed, entails this kind of cooperation.

Believers help others only to provide comfort and bring peace. For instance, believers help to improve one's health, to provide better living conditions, to give joy and happiness, to ease worries or strengthen faith. That is, the ultimate end of such help has to improve health, peace, the environment and people's faith.

However, those who have no Qur'anic understanding of mercy do not while helping someone appreciate these finer points. They do not even think of the possibility of the harm they may cause to others. For instance, lending money for gambling, prostitution or fraud is highly dam-

aging. The one who borrows the money sooner or later find himself in great trouble in this world. But the matter does not end there, for his suffering extends to the hereafter, because of his having acted against the commands of Allah. Furthermore, the lender ought also to accept the blame for having helped another to commit a sin. In this sense, he may become equally responsible for the sin. For this reason, Allah declares that such people will meet the most grievous punishment in the hereafter and that they will no longer be able to help one another:

> **"Why are you not helping one another?" No, today they come in absolute submission. (Surat as-Saffat: 25-26)**

Those who help one another out of goodness and piety will be rewarded as follows:

> **Those who produce a good action will receive ten like it. But those who produce a bad action will only be repaid with its equivalent and they will not be wronged. (Surat al-An'am: 160)**

> **…If anyone does a good action, We will increase the good of it for him. "Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Thankful". (Surat ash-Shura: 23)**

Being One of Those Who Enjoin the Right and Forbid the Wrong

Without a doubt, it is only believers who have any true knowledge of goodness and evil, since the Qur'an, which is "the criterion of judgment between right and wrong", provides them with the real meanings of these concepts. The Qur'an offers precise illustrations of the concepts of right,

wrong, goodness and evil so that everyone may have a full grasp of them. Moreover, because of their fear of Allah, Allah has granted believers **"discrimination between right and wrong"**. (Surat al-Anfal: 29) However, keeping this discrimination only to oneself is not in consonance with Islamic morality; a believer must also enjoin other people, who are willing to see the right and accept admonition, to live by the Qur'an. This being so, throughout their lives, believers impress upon others the difference between right and wrong. Allah commands believers thus:

> **Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success. (Surah Al 'Imran: 104)**
>
> **Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise, those who fast, those who bow, those who prostrate, those who command the right, those who forbid the wrong, those who preserve the limits of Allah: give good news to the believers. (Surat at-Tawba: 112)**

Allah informs those who fulfil His decree that they are the best community that has been raised by Him for mankind:

> **You are the best nation ever to be produced before mankind. You enjoin the right, forbid the wrong and believe in Allah. If the People of the Book were to believe, it would be better for them. Some of them are believers but most of them are deviators. (Surah Al 'Imran: 110)**

Believers take into consideration a crucial criterion

when they enjoin goodness and forbid wrongdoing; wrongful attitudes displayed by one in the past or those ones he currently assumes, do not give rise any kind of prejudice in believers. They never consider that anyone "will never be a believer in the true sense" because of his past errors. Believers do not make such distinctions between people in communicating Allah's message. They are very well aware that this is unjust and so strictly avoid it. They are aware that if they want other people also to display the high morality peculiar to believers, they have primarily to be informed about Islam and educated in the light of the Qur'an. For this very reason, no matter how unfavourable the attitude of others may be, believers never hesitate to enjoin goodness, forbid what is wrong and communicate the message to them.

However, despite all this striving, if their hearers insist on being intractable, they apply no coercion. Allah reveals this truth in the Qur'an when He says that there is no coercion in religion:

> **There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned… (Surat al-Baqara: 256)**

> **Remind, then, if the reminder benefits. (Surat al-A'la: 9)**

Believers enjoin good not only upon the ignorant who are irreligious but also upon believers. That is because, man makes mistakes not only because of lack of knowledge but also because he is forgetful or gives in to the temptations of his lower soul. In such situations, believers remind one another of the commands of the Qur'an, thereby enjoining good and forbidding evil. They warn

each other, aware that only those who have faith and do good deeds are worthy of the Garden and that those who do not avoid evil will suffer a grievous torment in hell. Allah declares that all believers are each other's guardians:

> **The men and women of the believers are friends of one another. They command what is right and forbid what is wrong, and establish prayer and pay welfare charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. They are the people on whom Allah will have mercy. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (Surat at-Tawba: 71)**

Furthermore, believers never feel exhausted in fulfilling this act of worship. No matter how frequently other people make mistakes, they never cease to warn and remind them with patience, compassion and affection. That is because, in numerous verses, Allah proclaims that He loves those who are patient and enjoins believers to be patient in living by Qur'anic morality.

Repelling the Bad with Something Better

In the Qur'an, Allah commands believers to repel the bad with something better:

> **A good action and a bad action are not the same. Repel the bad with something better and, if there is enmity between you and someone else, he will be like a bosom friend. (Surah Fussilat: 34)**

> **Ward off evil with what is better. We know very well what they express. (Surat al-Muminun: 96)**

As is evident from the above verses, Allah promises

believers that they will attain goodness when they repel evil with good. He further points out that even in situations of enmity, the relationship between foes turns into a warm friendship.

This is also what believers' understanding of mercy entails. When believers witness an attitude that does not please Allah, they primarily approach the offenders humbly and with tolerance, without falling a prey to pride. That is because they know that arrogance would have an adverse effect on their lives in the hereafter. Unlike those who do not observe Qur'anic morality, they do not hold a flawed rationale and say, "He is the one who has done wrong; he should act humbly", or "Let him do whatever he wishes". They recognise that Allah loves those who display the best attitude and showing a good attitude even when one is subjected to wickedness is acting in compliance with the Qur'an. This being the case, they know that acting humbly is not a loss but a great gain in the sight of Allah.

Believers encounter various different people throughout their lives. Yet, they never deviate from their moral code because of others' attitudes. Some people may speak derisively and be offensive in their words. They may show anger, enmity or do harm. However, a believer always perseveres in modesty, graciousness and compassion; he never responds to evil words in a similar vein. He does not mock people who mock him or display anger to someone who is angry with him. He remains calm when subjected to ignoble treatment. He even assumes a compassionate and tolerant attitude towards a person who has done him

harm. Ultimately, in the face of the sublime disposition of the believer, the wrongdoer feels ashamed of his behaviour and yearns to have such a noble character.

No doubt, while displaying all these attitudes, believers remain rational; they never let others do any harm or injustice to themselves or to other believers. Meanwhile, with the good attitude they show, they display the beauty of the values of the Qur'an, which draws people nearer to the morality that pleases Allah.

We need always to remember that the evil attitude shown by other people is not an excuse for us to deviate from our own high moral standards, a lapse with which Allah would not be pleased. After all, for one's deeds, everyone is himself responsible to his Creator. Furthermore, according to the Qur'an, being able to show compassion, mercy and goodness when confronted with an evil attitude is a sign of a sublime adherence to morality. That is because, this praiseworthy attitude of a believer makes manifest the strength of his loyalty to Allah. Indeed, the person in question patiently displays such an attitude only to please Allah.

In return for nobly displaying patience in order to live up to Qur'anic morality, Allah proclaims that there will be a twofold reward:

> **They will be given their reward twice over because they have been steadfast and because they ward off the bad with the good and give from what we have provided for them. (Surat al-Qasas: 54)**

Treating People Kindly

We did not create the heavens and earth and everything between them, except with truth. The Hour is certainly coming, so overlook (any human faults) with gracious forgiveness. (Surat al-Hijr: 85)

Allah enjoins believers to "overlook any human faults with gracious forgiveness". The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also encouraged believers towards this attribute of good character by saying, *"Every act of kindness is a charity" (Bukhari)*. This is an understanding of morality stemming from a believer's fear of Allah and his loyalty to Him. For this reason, a believer never swerves from code of conduct and, in order to earn Allah's approval, he treats people kindly throughout his life.

Whether the person dealt with is well-off or poor, young or old, a man or a woman does not alter a believer's morality. Not expecting any worldly reward in return for his attitude, a believer does not assess people by such yardsticks. Indeed, Allah sets the criteria for this in the following verse:

Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him. Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbours who are related to you and neighbours who are not related to you, and to companions and travellers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful. (Surat an-Nisa': 36)

By Quranic standards, a Muslim is held responsible

for treating all people kindly. However, this does not mean that he should approve the flawed reasoning or turn a blind eye to erroneous ideas. A believer always remains committed to the true path of Allah and never yields to the erroneous rationale of those he deals with. If someone is wrong in his attitude, a believer approaches him sincerely and compassionately and strives to encourage him to behave righteously. The believers' approach to disbelievers while communicating religion sets a good example of this. One of the examples Allah gives us in the Qur'an is the manner in which the Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, communicated Allah's religion to the Pharaoh, the then ruler of Egypt. Allah enjoins Musa, peace be upon him, to communicate His religion to the Pharaoh but to speak gently while doing so:

> **Go, you and your brother, with My Signs and do not slacken in remembering Me. Go to Pharaoh; he has overstepped the bounds. But speak to him with gentle words so that hopefully he will pay heed or show some fear. (Surah Ta Ha: 42-44)**

Following the commands of Allah, the Prophet Musa and his brother, the Prophet Harun, peace be upon them both, approached the Pharaoh with compassion and humbleness, in spite of the latter's insolence, and his cruel and proud behaviour.

Putting Things Right Between People

As stated earlier, the believers' understanding of compassion always leads them to treat people kindly. They never display a hostile, obstructive or destructive manner

and they lead the people around them to the truth. Being sincere adherents of Qur'anic ethics, they have a peaceful, conciliatory and constructive disposition. The fights, quarrels or disputes often engaged in by people who are distant from the values of the Qur'an, never figure in a believer's life, since he knows these are described in the Qur'an as totally despicable. This being the case, they forgive, show tolerance and enjoin the good, no matter what the circumstances, as the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also recommended in a hadith:

"Allah is the Forbearer and loves forbearance in all matters.'' (Bukhari and Muslim)

They also exhort other people to accept this standard of morality and remind them that this is what pleases Allah most and brings better rewards in the hereafter. All along, they conduct themselves in a manner pleasing to Allah, by resolving the issues which people have with each other.

Allah proclaims that those who display such a standard of morality only to seek Allah's pleasure, will be bountifully rewarded:

There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin charity, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward. (Surat an-Nisa': 114)

Making Self-Sacrifices

People, who consider human existence to be confined to the life of this world, are not likely to make sacrifices

for other people, unless there is some serious advantage to be gained. That is because they forget that they will encounter all their evil acts and good deeds in the hereafter.

Believers, on the other hand, having no doubts about the existence of the hereafter, know that they will be rewarded for each deed they engage in and similarly feel regret for the things they neglected. This being the case, they try to live up to the values of the Qur'an in the best way they can.

In numerous verses, Allah makes clear the importance of making sacrifices. Hence, believers strive to express the compassion and love they feel for other believers by the self-sacrificing manners they assume.

For someone to experience sacrifice as defined in the Qur'an in its real sense, he must primarily set aside all his selfish feelings and desires. Otherwise, guided by his worldly ambitions, he would wish to have the best of everything for himself. Believers are aware that everything in this world that has been given to them is but a temporary favour to test them and that they will have the best of everything in the hereafter, provided that they adopt the values of the Qur'an. For this reason, they take pleasure in giving something they like to someone else or giving priority to others so that they may experience something pleasurable. Indeed, Allah informs us that people can never attain true goodness unless they give away the things they love:

> **You will not attain true goodness until you give of what you love. Whatever you give away, Allah knows it. (Surah Al 'Imran: 92)**

Believers derive great pleasure from knowing that their sacrifices please other believers. They know as a matter of conscience that this is the right attitude and thus feel at ease in displaying an attitude that pleases Allah.

Even in situations where they themselves are in need, they do not hesitate to waive their rights. They do not praise themselves by expressing the sacrifices they make or try to make other people feel indebted for these sacrifices. This meritorious understanding of sacrifice is stressed in the following verse:

> **Those who were already settled in the abode, and in faith, before they came, love those who have migrated to them and do not find in their hearts any need for what they have been given and prefer them to themselves even if they themselves are needy. It is the people who are safe-guarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat al-Hashr: 9)**

Praying for the Believers' Hereafter

One of the most gracious acts of compassion among believers is to pray for each other's good. They know that their Lord is the Almighty, Who is capable of doing anything at any moment, if He wills. Our Lord invites believers to call on Him by praying and assures believers that their prayers will be answered:

> **If My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me. They should therefore respond to Me and believe in Me so that hopefully they will be rightly guided. (Surat al-Baqara: 186)**

Indeed, believers wholeheartedly answer the call of Allah and ask for all kinds of fine things both for this world and the hereafter. Out of their compassion for other believers, they also pray for their good. Whatever they wish for themselves, they also ask for on behalf of other believers. Furthermore, their understanding of compassion is so noble that they ask for better things for other believers.

The main reason for their compassion is their unshakable faith in the eternal life, which is due to begin after death. They always pray for a blissful life—endowed with Allah's mercy—for believers in the Garden. They call upon Allah and ask Him to improve the morality of themselves and their brothers, to protect them from evil deeds, to forgive them and reward them with the Garden.

There is no doubt that this is a very elevated moral code, considering that people are, by nature, prone to strive for their own good and comfort, and tend to keep the better things for themselves. Unlike this example, the fact that believers also show consideration for their brothers is a manifestation of their elevated morality. This is also stressed in the Qur'an in numerous prayers of believers:

> **"…Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake! Our Lord, do not place on us a load like the one You placed on those before us! Our Lord, do not place on us a load we have not the strength to bear! And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy on us. You are our Master, so help us against disbelieving people." (Surat al-Baqara: 286)**

"…Our Lord, pour down steadfastness upon us and take us back to You as Muslims." (Surat al-A'raf: 126)

And there are others who say, "Our Lord, give us good in this world, and good in the hereafter, and safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire". (Surat al-Baqara: 201)

"Our Lord, do not make our hearts swerve aside after You have guided us. And give us mercy from You. You are the Ever-Giving. Our Lord, You are the Gatherer of mankind to a Day of which there is no doubt. Allah will not break His promise". (Surah Al 'Imran: 8-9)

Praying for the Next Generation's Faith

In the Qur'an, Allah commands believers to show deep compassion and care for the young children they will leave behind after their death. For this reason, when believers grow old and draw near to death, they pay the utmost attention to not leaving their young children unassisted. They raise them as people of faith and teach them how to be trustworthy, wise and of high morals:

People should show concern in the same way that they would fear for small children if they were to die leaving them behind. They should heed Allah and say words that are appropriate. (Surat an-Nisa': 9)

In this regard, Allah gives numerous examples from the lives of the prophets. The prophets prayed both for their children and the generations that would succeed them, and struggled to raise them as Muslims of sublime

morality. Some of the examples related in the Qur'an are as follows:

When Ibrahim said, "My Lord! Make this land a place of safety and keep me and my sons from worshipping idols". (Surah Ibrahim: 35)

"My Lord! Make me and my descendants people who establish prayer. My Lord! Accept my prayer." (Surah Ibrahim: 40)

Those who say, "Our Lord, give us joy in our wives and children and make us a good example for those who do their duty". (Surat al-Furqan: 74)

And when Ibrahim built the foundations of the House with Isma'il: "Our Lord, accept this from us! You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Our Lord, make us both Muslims submitted to You, and our descendants a Muslim community submitted to You. Show us our rites of worship and turn towards us. You are the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful". (Surat al-Baqara: 127-128)

When his Lord said to him, "Become a Muslim!" he said, "I am a Muslim who has submitted to the Lord of all the worlds". Ibrahim directed his sons to this, as did Ya'qub: "My sons! Allah has chosen this religion for you, so do not die except as Muslims". (Surat al-Baqara: 131-132)

Asking Forgiveness for Believers' Mistakes

Know then that there is no god except Allah and ask forgiveness for your wrongdoing, and for the men and women who believe. Allah knows both your activity and your repose. (Surah Muhammad: 19)

The kind of compassion imbued by the Qur'an in believers manifests itself in the way believers care for one another. They feel fear—fear of torment in hell—not only for themselves, but also for other believers. They wish that their brothers may also attain eternal salvation just as they wish it for themselves. Therefore, they pray for forgiveness. There are numerous verses in the Qur'an explaining this delicate understanding of compassion by believers:

"Our Lord, those You cast into the Fire, You have indeed disgraced. The wrongdoers will have no helpers".

"Our Lord, we heard a caller calling us to belief: 'Believe in your Lord!' and we believed. Our Lord, forgive us our wrong actions, erase our bad actions from us and take us back to You with those who are truly good."

"Our Lord, give us what You promised us through Your Messengers, and do not disgrace us on the Day of Rising. You do not break Your promise." (Surah Al 'Imran: 192-194)

All they said was, "Our Lord, forgive us our wrong actions and any excesses we went to in what we did

and make our feet firm and help us against these disbelieving people". (Surah Al 'Imran: 147)

"My Lord! Make me and my descendants people who establish prayer. My Lord! Accept my prayer. Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day the Reckoning takes place". (Surah Ibrahim: 40-41)

Moreover, believers also pray for the believers of the past generations, because no matter in which period or place they lived, believers are always brothers. We again find examples of believers praying for believers of past generations again in the Qur'an:

Those who have come after them say, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and do not put any rancour in our hearts towards those who believe. Our Lord, You are All-Gentle, Most Merciful". (Surat al-Hashr: 10)

Not Mocking Others

In societies where the values of religion are not upheld, "mocking other people" does not disturb people so long as they are not the ones being mocked. Besides, this is considered "fun". For this reason, they indulge in mockery whenever they have the opportunity. What they actually try to accomplish with such misdemeanours is to exalt themselves while they humiliate others. For them, any weakness of a human being can be the subject of derision. A mispronunciation, the physical make-up of an individual, lameness, obesity or anything such as sneez-

ing or staggering can be made a mockery of.

However, believers never descend to such behaviour. After all, they know that mockery is severely condemned in the Qur'an and that it is conduct disapproved of by Allah:

> **You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves… (Surat al-Hujurat: 11)**

The criteria taken into account by believers while assessing others are their faith, good values and sincere efforts to draw nearer to Allah. This being the case, they never humiliate or provoke anyone because of his physical weaknesses. On the contrary, these weaknesses evoke feelings of mercy in believers and thus they make a sincere effort to eliminate them. Similarly, believers never embarrass others because they mispronounce a word, stumble, or fail to deal with the kind of unfavourable situation which one may encounter at any time.

Moreover, believers never indulge in offensive behaviour, such as mockery, just to amuse themselves. They take no pleasure from a joke, conversation or attitude which is intended to offend people. They never lapse into such behaviour. Furthermore, in any incident in which an individual is mocked or humiliated, they can never remain silent. Believers are entirely on the side of the person who is being harassed and never let others hurt him. As a matter of conscience, they can imagine how such behaviour as they would never like to experience themselves, can also cause offence to others.

All this meticulous attention to proper behaviour is

because of their fear of Allah and the exemplary moral values to which they adhere. Their conscience and understanding of compassion prevent them from engaging in any such graceless act as mockery. Besides, aware that Allah warns mockers of a bitter torment in hell, they strictly avoid such an attitude:

Woe to every scorner and mocker who has amassed wealth and hoarded it!

He thinks his wealth will make him live for ever.

No indeed! He will be flung into the Shatterer.

And what will convey to you what the Shatterer is?

The kindled Fire of Allah reaching right into the heart.

It is sealed in above them in towering columns. (Surat al-Humaza: 1-9)

Not to Call People by Derogatory Nicknames

The Qur'an commands believers not to violate the rights of others and believers are sedulous in complying with this command; they always treat each other with respect, esteem and honour. One habit they particularly avoid is calling one another by offensive nicknames.

As we know, this is quite prevalent in societies in which people do not live by the values of the Qur'an. Often, they have ulterior motives in doing so. The negative impressions people avoid sharing with one another are mostly expressed by giving nicknames to people.

Sometimes, the intention is to humiliate, ridicule or offend people. These names often express other's errors or weaknesses. Hence, every time someone is called by his nickname, he is ridiculed and thereby offended. Believers, however, never use a name that would cause resentment to others because of Allah's commandment:

> **You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to belief! Those people who do not turn from it are wrongdoers. (Surat al-Hujurat: 11)**

In compliance with Allah's command, believers are frank enough to express one another's faults and thereby purify them of these flaws. Since they openly and sincerely express their opinion, they never feel the need to imply something.

This is, at the same time, a clear manifestation of the compassion believers feel for one another. They never adopt even the slightest attitude that would cause uneasiness or distress to others. Through these values, they become role models for those who do not adhere to the values of the Qur'an.

Feeding the Needy out of the Inheritance

As is stressed throughout this book, Allah urges people to be compassionate towards the needy and not to ignore the needs of the poor. He draws attention to the fact

that sharing one's possessions and money with the needy is a deed with which He would be pleased. Furthermore, when someone inherits wealth, it is recommended that he allocate a certain share to the poor.

This is why, when believers inherit, they give relatives, orphans and the poor a certain share. Allah's recommendation regarding this is expressed as follows in the Qur'an:

> **If other relatives or orphans or poor people attend the sharing-out, provide for them out of it and speak to them correctly and courteously. (Surat an-Nisa': 8)**

This practice of believers also makes manifest the elevated nature of their conscience and compassion. They never amass a fortune while they are surrounded with many needy people.

Unlike believers, when those who are strangers to the values of the Qur'an become heirs, let alone sharing what thus inherit with the poor, they try to keep it a secret. That is because, they feel concerned that once it becomes known, many people including their relatives, orphans and the poor would ask for help. Although they have the means, they do not suffer the slightest pangs of conscience to see such people in need and to leave them unassisted. They wish to possess the best of everything and to spend for their own pleasure. Otherwise, they feel this is a great loss.

Believers, on the other hand, in compliance with Allah's Will, willingly give to the needy even if they never ask for it. Such compassion will be rewarded in the hereafter as follows:

> **Nor will they give away any amount, whether large**

or small, nor will they cross any valley, without it being written down for them so that Allah can recompense them for the best of what they did. (Surat at-Tawba: 121)

Giving the Best of Everything in Alms

People who do not abide by the Qur'an perceive giving alms as giving away old possessions that are no longer needed. This is rather like a tradition they hold to. In the process, they are very careful not to include any of the things for which they feel some attachment. Often their main purpose is to get rid of old possessions and thus create a false image of doing good. In one verse, Allah draws attention to the fact that their intention is often to show off:

And also for those who spend their wealth to show off to people, not having belief in Allah and the Last Day. Anyone who has made Devil his comrade, what an evil comrade he is! (Surat an-Nisa': 38)

Giving away a possession one does not feel like using because it is outmoded is a sign of deeming the recipient inferior. Because such donors rank people according to their money, they do not consider a needy person worthy of respect. Consequently, they think it is not proper to allocate the best of what they have to poor people. However, the Qur'an commands as follows:

You who believe! Give away some of the good things you have earned and some of what the earth produces for you. Do not have recourse to bad things

when you give, things you would only take with your eyes tight shut! Know that Allah is Rich Beyond Need, Praiseworthy. (Surat al-Baqara: 267)

The justice and compassion of believers call for the rights of all believers to be protected; believers can never accept that other believers should have lower living standards than their own and thus be in difficulties, when they themselves enjoy better conditions. Similarly, they do not allow others to consider needy people as being worthy only of inferior conditions. To needy believers, they try to provide the best conditions they can afford, so that they can also attain a standard of living at least matching their own.

While giving in charity to earn Allah's approval, it is essential to make sacrifices from the possessions for which one feels some attachment rather than what one's lower self would not like to give away. As is clear, it is not a sacrifice to give away something to which a person attaches no importance. By listening to their conscience, believers can readily make this distinction. They choose the things that are to be given away from the fine food and clothing they have and the possessions they cherish. This is a clear manifestation of the mercy and compassion they have for other believers.

The following is another verse by which Allah encourages believers to give of the things they hold dear:

You will not attain true goodness until you give of what you love. Whatever you give away, Allah knows it. (Surah Al 'Imran: 92)

Being Honest in Trade

Believers' feelings of compassion make them honest, delicate and kind towards others. For this reason, let alone "committing fraud in trade", believers even disallow the slightest mistake or carelessness that may cause harm or trouble to believers or that may put them in difficulty. They are very meticulous about protecting people's rights and maintaining justice. They never commit the sin of using up anyone's hard earned possessions unjustly, nor do they allow anyone else to engage in such a misdeed, which they consider the result of a cruel attitude. That is because Allah's command on this is explicit:

> **Give full measure when you measure and weigh with a level balance. That is better and gives the best result. (Surat al-Isra: 35)**

As is seen in the above verse, Allah enjoins believers to be honest in trade, and not to cheat in measurement, weight or calculation, because that is ultimately the best way to conduct oneself.

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also mentioned the importance of honest trade in a saying to the owners of measurements and weights: *"You have been certainly entrusted with two affairs about which the former nations before you were destroyed". (Tirmidhi)*

However, there are some who, despite being aware of these warnings, persist in fraudulent dealings. When they feel sure that nobody is watching them, they do not hesitate to unjustly take others' money, goods and possessions or to cheat in measurement, weight or calculation.

They consider it an advantage when the client does not understand that he has been cheated, and they assume that the money they make or the goods they acquire by means of deception will be of avail to them. However, since all such acts are unlawful in the sight of Allah, they are of no benefit to the doer. Allah thus warns those who are dishonest:

> **Woe to the stinters! Those who, when they take a measure from people, exact full measure, but when they give them a measure or weight, hand over less than is due. Do such people not realise that they will be raised up on a Terrible Day, the Day mankind will stand before the Lord of all the worlds? (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 1-6)**

All messengers of Allah sent throughout history also commanded their people to be just in measure and calculation and not to cheat people. In numerous verses, the warnings of these messengers are conveyed to us. The message of the Prophet Shu'aib, peace be upon him, who was sent to Madyan, illustrates this sensitive approach explicitly:

> **And to Madyan We sent their brother Shu'ayb who said, "My people, worship Allah! You have no other god than Him. A Clear Sign has come to you from your Lord. Give full measure and full weight. Do not diminish people's goods. Do not cause corruption in the land after it has been put right. That is better for you if you are believers". (Surat al-A'raf: 85)**

Not to Harm Children for Fear of Poverty

Deliberately or unintentionally, it is impossible that a believer could cause harm to an innocent person. No matter what the circumstances, for his own sake, a believer does not display an attitude which may cause hardship to another. He does not cause any material loss to anyone else while trying to earn for himself. He does not risk someone else's health to save his own. Neither does he secure own well-being through others' starvation. In brief, he always gives priority to the needs, peace and well-being of others. Even if it be a child, a captive or someone he has never known, a believer, thanks to his compassion, always considers others' advantage before his own. In order to display such nobility, he makes all kinds of sacrifices.

In the Qur'an, Allah gives examples of those who attempt to kill their children for fear of not being able to look after them and warns them against such a cruel and violent attitude:

> **Say: "Come and I will recite to you what your Lord has forbidden for you: that you do not associate anything with Him; that you are good to your parents; that you do not kill your children because of poverty—We will provide for you and them..." (Surat al-An'am: 151)**
>
> **Do not kill your children out of fear of being poor. We will provide for them and you. Killing them is a terrible mistake. (Surat al-Isra': 31)**

It may be that "killing children out of fear of poverty"

or "burying them alive"—all practices peculiar to pre-Islamic societies, are not common in our day. Yet, in modern societies, a different form of this crime is committed: abandoning children on the streets for fear of poverty.

Believers take refuge in Allah from committing such a crime and feel a deep fear of the grievous end of those who commit such a crime. Indeed, the compassion imbued in them by Qur'anic morality forbids them to perpetrate such cruelty upon another human being—let alone upon a small child, simply out of concern for their future. If they are really in a difficult situation due to poverty, they try to eliminate this problem by developing viable solutions within the limits of the Qur'an.

WHAT HAPPENS IF PEOPLE DO NOT LIVE BY THE QUR'ANIC UNDERSTANDING OF MERCY?



The only way that ensures a peaceful and happy life for a community is the exercise of mercy as defined by the Qur'an. Failing to incorporate this model in daily life makes unrest, disorder and injustice take root in society. That is simply because, where mercy is absent, cruelty must exist. In a society harassed by cruelty, its members suffer both physical and spiritual harm. Indeed, the news bulletins we listen to every day make this point most obvious; they are full of the cruelty inflicted on people; people who starve, mothers who beg on the streets to feed their children, those who are oppressed, attacked or beaten, those who live in abject poverty in tents, people who commit suicide or fight for a loaf of bread… The main reason for all this misery is the cruelty and merci-

lessness brought about by disbelief.

Other than the concept of mercy as revealed by the Qur'an, which stems from the fear and love of Allah, there is no reason that would prevent an individual from committing wicked deeds. In a society where people do not feel true mercy, there is nothing to prevent them from abusing women and children, murdering people for theft, leaving orphans on the streets and committing many similar misdeeds.

In a society devoid of the Qur'anic understanding of mercy, the well-off do nothing to ensure the well-being of the poor, the rights of those who are unjustly treated remain undefended, and no shelter is provided for those who sleep out on streets. Unless there is something to be gained, no one troubles to help another. While there are people out on the streets starving to death, the affluent throw huge amounts of food—enough to feed hundreds of people—into the garbage. Similarly, people stoop to such venality as pursuing vested interests, perpetrating fraud or violating others' rights.

Again, the members of such a society do not take any serious action again of fraud, injustice and falsehood, but simply keep their mouths shut. They never aspire to solve the problems of others and even consider this a vain endeavour. Therefore, a system emerges in which no one feels responsible for another, no one takes any risks to protect others and no one stands up for others' rights.

The cruel and merciless oppress the weak as they please. In an environment in which people do not live by the Qur'anic mercy and good values instilled by religion,

unrest, trouble and cruelty become all-pervasive.

However, it should be borne in mind that one who is merciless primarily causes harm to himself. One who ignores the right guidance of his conscience and indulges in cruelty can never be at peace with himself. That is because, deep inside, he does suffer the pangs of conscience. Every once in a while, his conscience gives him pain; he stumbles upon a person in need and recalls that he does not help the poor although he could if he wanted to. Similarly, every time he acts selfishly, his conscience bothers him. The only way to ease his conscience is to follow its dictates. That is because, conscience is the power that leads one to Allah's approval and the Qur'an. That is because, by nature, man attains happiness only when he follows the voice of his conscience.

No matter how the individual strives to forget or suppress his mercilessness or avoids acknowledging the injustice and unfairness around him, his conscience never allows him to forget his cruel attitudes.

In a society in which Islamic morality is adopted, overall peace and security prevail. People feel assured that they will definitely receive help when they need support. Those having adequate means never leave the poor and the homeless in despair. Children are raised in healthy environments where they are offered due care and love. The strong never oppress the weak. Nobody violates others' rights. Means are allocated fairly, thereby offering everyone favourable conditions in which to live. The number of cruel people diminish and cruelty disappears. Everyone is entitled to have access to medical care,

and a clean and comfortable environment, no matter whether they are rich or poor.

Hence, the only way to be saved from the chaos and the cruelty which is caused by irreligion is to live by standards of mercy described in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Moreover, turning away from cruelty to mercy is just a matter of reforming one's intentions. This will bring the individual a blissful life both in this world and beyond. Indeed, this change will make him recognise the perfection of the values of the Qur'an. Besides, Allah promises to forgive the wrongdoings of those who decide to eschew cruelty and live by the values of the Qur'an:

> **But if anyone repents after his wrongdoing and puts things right, Allah will turn towards him. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 39)**

CONCLUSION



Throughout this book, we have elaborated upon the perfect understanding of mercy which the Qur'an exhorts man to have, the exemplary moral values that manifest themselves when mercy is integral to one's life and the beauty and bliss a society will attain once people begin to live up to this standard of morality. We have also tried to describe the dismal atmosphere of an environment in which people do not display the Qur'anic understanding of mercy and the physical and spiritual harm caused by such an environment to the human soul. As is evident from these descriptions, the differences between these two models of morality are incomparably great and obvious. The understanding of mercy offered by the Qur'an makes people develop a noble character endowed with good values, and guarantees the establishment of peaceful societies. The absence of this understanding, on the other hand, makes people cruel, troublesome and ignoble.

Furthermore, the sublimity engendered by this ele-

vated understanding of mercy, which stems from the individual's pure intention of attaining the approval of Allah, is not limited to this world. The rewards for such an individual also extend to the hereafter. Indeed, an attribute of the people of paradise who are called to be "Companions of the Right" in the Qur'an is their summoning one another "to urge each other to compassion" while they are in this world:

> **Then to be one of those who believe and urge each other to patience and urge each other to mercifulness. (Surat al-Balad: 17)**

As we have seen, those who live by the understanding of mercy as defined by the Qur'an, and accordingly engage in good deeds, will attain bliss both in this world and beyond.

This book is a summons to all men and women to think about what true mercy is and to reconsider to what extent they are imbued with the good values of the Qur'an which demonstrate mercy. To encourage everyone to be patient and persistent in displaying good values and mercy, thereby earning Allah's mercy and paradise, and to be one of the best in the sight of Allah, are the goals to which this book is dedicated.

THE EVOLUTION MISCONCEPTION



Every detail in this universe points to a superior creation. By contrast, materialism, which seeks to deny the fact of creation in the universe, is nothing but an unscientific fallacy.

Once materialism is invalidated, all other theories based on this philosophy are rendered baseless. Foremost of them is Darwinism, that is, the theory of evolution. This theory, which argues that life originated from inanimate matter through coincidences, has been demolished with the recognition that the universe was created by Allah. American astrophysicist Hugh Ross explains this as follows:

> *Atheism, Darwinism, and virtually all the "isms" emanating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century philosophies are built upon the assumption, the incorrect assumption, that the universe is infinite. The singularity has brought us face to face with the cause – or causer – beyond/behind/before the universe and all that it contains, including life itself.*[1]

It is Allah Who created the universe and Who designed it down to its smallest detail. Therefore, it is impossible for the theory of evolution, which holds that living beings are not created by Allah, but are products of coincidences, to be true.

Unsurprisingly, when we look at the theory of evolution, we see that this theory is denounced by scientific findings. The design in life is extremely complex and striking. In the inanimate world, for instance, we can explore how sensitive are the balances which atoms rest upon, and further, in the animate world, we can observe in what complex designs these atoms were brought together, and how extraordinary are the mechanisms and structures such as proteins, enzymes, and cells, which are manufactured with them.

This extraordinary design in life invalidated Darwinism at the end of the twentieth century.

We have dealt with this subject in great detail in some of our other studies, and shall continue to do so. However, we think that, considering its importance, it will be helpful to make a short summary here as well.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

Although a doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the 19th century. The most important development that made the theory the top topic of the world of science was the book by Charles Darwin titled *The Origin of Species* published in 1859. In this book, Darwin denied that different living species on the earth were created separately by Allah. According to Darwin, all living beings had a common ancestor and they diversified over time through small changes.

Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties of the Theory," the theory was failing in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all his hopes in new scientific discover-

ies, which he expected to solve the "Difficulties of the Theory." However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties.

The defeat of Darwinism against science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

1) The theory can by no means explain how life originated on the earth.

2) There is no scientific finding showing that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any power to evolve at all.

3) The fossil record proves completely the contrary of the suggestions of the theory of evolution.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, of the first step of the alleged evolutionary process it has to be inquired: How did this "first cell" originate?

Since the theory of evolution denies creation and does not accept any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan, or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. This, however,

is a claim inconsistent with even the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes from Life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, the theory asserting that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, worms developing in meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, only some time later was it understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even in the period when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, which disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said, *"Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."*[2]

Advocates of the theory of evolution resisted the findings

of Pasteur for a long time. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts in the Twentieth Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930's, he tried to prove that the cell of a living being could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession: "Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms."[3]

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve the problem of the origin of life. The best known of these experiments was carried out by American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, the atmosphere used in the experiment having been very different from real earth conditions.[4]

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.[5]

All the evolutionist efforts put forth throughout the

twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended with failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada from San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth* Magazine in 1998:

> *Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?*[6]

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a big impasse about the origin of life is that even the living organisms deemed the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living being is more complex than all of the technological products produced by man. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10^{950} for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} is practically considered to be impossible.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of the cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. It is calculated that if the information coded in DNA were written down, this would make a giant library consisting of 900 volumes of encyclopaedias of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: the DNA can only replicate with the help of some specialized

proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can only be realized by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

> *It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.* [7]

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated from natural causes, then it has to be accepted that life was "created" in a supernatural way. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

Imaginary Mechanisms of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection". The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means Of Natural Selection…*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a

deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species:*

> *Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.*[8]

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favourable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science in his age. According to the French biologist Lamarck, who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation and these traits, accumulating from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, according to Lamarck, giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples, and in his book *The Origin of Species,* for instance, said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.[9]

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Mendel and verified by the science of genetics that flourished in the 20th century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favour as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory", or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930's. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings because of external factors such as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favourable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that stands for evolution in the world is Neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings present on the earth formed as a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms such as the ears, eyes, lungs, and wings, underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they always cause harm to them.

The reason for this is very simple: the DNA has a very complex structure and random effects can only cause harm to it. American geneticist B.G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

> *First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.*[10]

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harm-

ful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living beings, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer). No doubt, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself" as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, neither could any imaginary process called evolution have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the theory of evolution, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else in time and all species have come into being in this way. According to the theory, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, then numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived

in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals had really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

> *If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.*[11]

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the 19th century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All the fossils unearthed in excavations showed that, contrary to the expectations of evolutionists, life appeared on earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

A famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

> *The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.*[12]

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, it is very strong evidence that living beings are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor can be that this species was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biolo-

gist Douglas Futuyma:

> *Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.*[13]

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the earth. That means that "the origin of species" is, contrary to Darwin's supposition, not evolution but creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution

The subject most often brought up by the advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that the modern men of today evolved from some kind of ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, it is claimed that there existed some "transitional forms" between modern man and his ancestors. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

1. *Australopithecus*
2. *Homo habilis*
3. *Homo erectus*
4. *Homo sapiens*

Evolutionists call the so-called first ape-like ancestors of men *"Australopithecus"* which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various Australopithecus specimens by two world famous

anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, has shown that these belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.[14]

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to the evolutionist claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the most important proponents of the theory of evolution in the twentieth century, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that *"particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of Homo sapiens, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."*[15]

By outlining the link chain as "*Australopithecus > Homo habilis > Homo erectus > Homo sapiens,*" evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that Australopithecus, Homo habilis and Homo erectus lived at different parts of the world at the same time.[16]

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. *Homo sapiens neandarthalensis and Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man) co-existed in the same region.[17]

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. A paleontologist from Harvard University, Stephen Jay Gould, explains this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he is an evolutionist himself:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lin-

eages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.[18]

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is sought to be upheld with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific ground.

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years, and particularly studied *Australopithecus* fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science." He formed a spectrum of sciences ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"—that is, depending on concrete data—fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception"—concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense–and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.[19]

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Technology In The Eye and The Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of "how we see". Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the retina of the eye. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and they reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain called the centre of vision. These electric signals are perceived in this centre of the brain as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that the inside of the brain is solid dark, and light does not reach the location where the brain is situated. The place called the centre of vision is a solid dark place where no light ever reaches; it may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the 20th century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you read, your hands with which you hold it, then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image.

For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective having depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV, and reach the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system but it is not possible to watch it without putting on glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear; the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them; the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating

them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalises in the centre of hearing in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just like it is from light: it does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your brain, which is insulated from sound, you listen to the symphonies of an orchestra, and hear all the noises in a crowded place. However, if the sound level in your brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, it would be seen that a complete silence is prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavour, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality HI-FI systems produced by the biggest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a HI-FI you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the technology of the human body are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does HI-FI; it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no visual or recording apparatus produced by man has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear.

However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater fact lies beyond all this.

To Whom Does the Consciousness that Sees and Hears Within the Brain Belong?

Who is it that watches an alluring world in its brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose?

The stimulations coming from the eyes, ears, and nose of a human being travel to the brain as electro-chemical nervous impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact about this subject: Who is it that perceives these electro-chemical nervous impulses as images, sounds, odours and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for eye, ear, and nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? There is no doubt that this consciousness does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot give any answer to these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by Allah. The spirit needs neither the eye to watch the images, nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, nor does it need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty Allah, should fear Him and seek refuge in Him, He Who squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimetres in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is a claim evidently at variance with scientific findings. The theory's claim on the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the intermediate forms required by the theory never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas such as the earth-centered universe model have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is pressingly kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against the theory as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that the theory of evolution is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward for the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

> *It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how*

mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door. [20]

These are explicit statements that Darwinism is a dogma kept alive just for the sake of adherence to the materialist philosophy. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter created life. It insists that millions of different living species; for instance, birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales and human beings originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as the pouring rain, the lightning flash, etc., out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to defend it just so as "not to allow a Divine Foot in the door."

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice will see this evident truth: All living beings are works of a Creator, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise and All-Knowing. This Creator is Allah, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The Theory of Evolution is the Most Potent Spell in the World

It needs to be made clear that anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As has been explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning

professors, university students, scientists such as Einstein and Galileo, artists such as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Pavarotti, as well as antelopes, lemon trees and carnations. Moreover, the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people. That is why it is quite justifiable to speak of the theory of evolution as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of the Prophet Ibrahim worshipping idols they had made with their own hands or the people of the Prophet Musa worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, this situation is a lack of reason pointed to by Allah in the Qur'an. He reveals in many verses that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who disbelieve, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2: 6-7)

...They have hearts they do not understand with. They have eyes they do not see with. They have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Qur'an, 7: 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven,

and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say, "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Qur'an, 15: 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason and consciousness, the planet Earth with all its features so perfectly suited to life, and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, Allah reveals in the Qur'an in the incident of the Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, and Pharaoh that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told the Prophet Musa to meet with his own magicians. When the Prophet Musa did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said, "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Qur'an, 7: 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from the Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, and those who believed in him. However, the evidence put forward by the Prophet Musa broke that spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged" as the verse puts it.

We revealed to Musa, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Qur'an, 7: 117-119)

As we can see from that verse, when it was realized that what these people who had first cast a spell over others had done was just an illusion, they lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who under the influence of a similar spell believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them abandon them, they too will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, Malcolm Muggeridge, an atheist philosopher and supporter of evolution admitted he was worried by just that prospect:

I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.[21]

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a god, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see the true face of the theory of evolution are wondering with amazement how it was that they were ever taken in by it.

They said, "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."

(Surat al-Baqara: 32)

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